CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly • 21 September 1996 • Issue 236

Launch to star system

CPT begins countdown

Designs on interiors

Tie-up produces a total solution

STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

'Our customers will judge' Bill Russell

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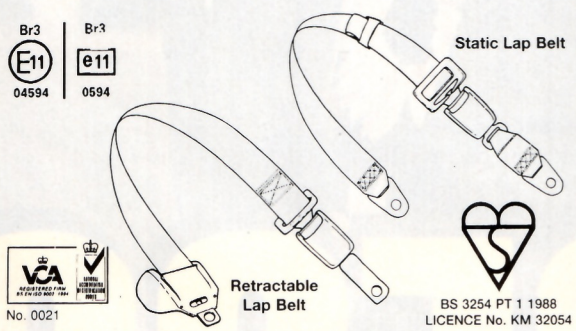

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For details of membership contact the Chairman, Neil Millington on 01274 688990

Coach and Bus Week is published by Emap Automotive, part of Emap Business Communications, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
Tel 01733 467000 Fax 01733 467154

Editor
Mike Morgan 01733 467139
News editor
Mark Williams 01733 467140
e-mail: MarkW@automotive.emap.co.uk
Production editor
Frank Forster 01733 467142
Tourism editor
William Golden 01733 467141
Northern news editor
Andrew Jarosz 0113 2566505
Designer
Tina Golden 01733 467143

Group sales manager
Hugh Cairns 01733 467151
Assistant advertisement manager
Mike Moore 01733 467145
Advertisement team leader
Julia Hinkins 01733 467144
Sales executive
Leanne Dow 01733 467148
Classified telesales executives
Jo Collins 01733 467117
Neil Mason 01733 467147
Michelle Wood 01733 467146

PA to publishing director
Lisa Wilson 01733 467157

Group production manager
Nicky Curd 01733 467121
Production assistants
Debi McGowan 01733 467123
Suzanne Porter 01733 467124

Publishing director
Mark Barton 01733 467136
Managing director
Ian Griffin 01733 467007

Subscriptions 01733 467048
CBW, Emap Automotive Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS
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CBW Coach and Bus Week

What? Signs of co-operation?

PERHAPS we are looking at the run-up to the new millennium through rose-tinted spectacles, but do we detect the signs of willingness of central and local government to work more closely with commercial public transport companies?

In this issue, there are a couple of stories which suggest the stand-off which evolved between publicly-funded councils and privately-funded commerce is weakening.

In Norwich, Eastern Counties is thrashing out plans with the county council to substantially build the public transport infrastructure... and indeed, buy new buses. Cowie County Bus has low-floors in Hertford partly due to its negotiation in county hall. And CPT director general Veronica Palmer reports tentative glad tidings from her first, formal meeting with the Labour Party's all-new transport team.

It is, of course, expediency which is forging new partnerships between operators and government. It is equally expedient for operators to promote themselves as the sole solution to the traffic jams, when such business is clearly profitable. But a middle line between the two must be drawn if the UK is to reach the public transport standards of even the most modest schemes elsewhere in Europe.

Operators do not owe this debt to councils, or even to passengers, but to themselves. The long-range forecast looks good, but only if both sides are willing to forget the mistrust which has dogged debate for the last 10 years.

● Coach star rating may be on its way, says the Confederation of Passenger Transport, and operators are being consulted all the way.

Star rating is a consumer-related quality system which, if it's run properly, can only be good for the industry. As long as EVERY coach falls within its scope, it should make it much easier for hirers to set a standard and stick with it, no matter which operator is supplying the vehicle... and whether the vehicle is a low-cost run-around for the skittles team or a 49-seat flagship for the annual sports and social club tour.

The system eventually adopted by the CPT will depend almost entirely on the views of its members, the wider industry and from consumers. When the time comes, ensure you have your say... or let *CBW* know, and we'll pass on your comments.

Mike Morgan
Editor

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events

21-29 September: IAA 56th International Motor Show for Commercial Vehicles, Hannover, Germany, details on 0049 (69) 75 70-2 79

23-24 September: Integrated Passenger Transport, Can It Work? Two-day CIT conference, Whitehall Place, London. Details from Jo Palmer 0171 233 7600, fax 0171 233 7611

1-3 October: Expocoach, Hall 3, NEC, Birmingham. Contact show manager, Mark Griffin on 01926 888123, fax 01926 888004

15 October: Braking into the 21st Century, one-day conference by Don, Wabco and Rockwell Automotive at Telford Exhibition Centre. Details from Marie Barker on 01244 391391

15 October: Personal Security and Transport, Developing an Effective Strategy for Crime Prevention and Passenger Security on Public Transport, one-day conference at The London Marriott Hotel. Details from Helen Houseman on 0171 233 7600

16-17 October: Bus & Coach 96, Institution of Mechanical Engineers conference, IMechE HQ, 1 Birdcage Walk, London SW1. Details from Philip George on 0171 973 1316, fax 0171 222 9881, E-Mail: P-GEORGE@IMECHE.ORG.UK

17 October: Buses Worldwide meeting, Fred Tallent Hall, Drummond Street, London NW1. Details from Ian Johnston, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hants, GU13 9HE

21-22 October: CPT annual conference, The Park Hotel, Cardiff. Details on 0171 831 7546/fax 0171 242 0053

21-24 October: Mitcar, Paris, Porte de Versailles, details on 00 33 1 41 29 97 27 fax 00 33 1 41 29 96 68

23 November: ***CBW* Coach Industry Awards, Purbeck Hall, Bournemouth. Entry forms must be returned before 31 July. Details on 01733 467139**

▼ Coach

'Must be structure'

IF STAR rating is to have any effect within the industry, it must be structured to suit the public, not the operator, say operators we spoke to.

Cyril Chambers, of Chambers Coaches of Stevenage, said the benefits of a Belgian-style star-rating scheme were enormous but would only be available to operators if the public had full information.

"I just wonder whether the public would understand it. We run only two or three executive coaches which would reach four-star standard, but that doesn't worry me," said Mr Chambers. "I've 10 57 seaters which would benefit from classification. My major worry is the system would end up so complicated the public wouldn't't understand it."

Suffolk operator David Thompson of D Way Travel agreed the success of any quality rating scheme will entirely depend on the public's understanding of it.

"It would be better than the current situation, where nobody knows what an executive coach is but, at the moment, nobody has any idea what the tourist board's crown-rating system means, for instance," said CPT member Mr Thompson. "To work, the star-rating system must have cut-and-dried criteria. We must also be careful not to make each band of star rating too broad. Is five bands enough?

"If the parameters are too wide, the public will be disappointed with a five-star coach from the bottom of the band... particularly where the coach warrants a five-star rating but the service is one star.

"But I'm all for star rating. I believe it is the way forward for what is, after all, a cottage industry. If it's 95 per cent foolproof, a star-rating system would improve rates."

Coaching giant Shearings also backed the principle but said that, in practice, it should reflect the needs of passengers.

Shearings' Jimmy King

"If the system adopted were identical to the IRU scheme, our coaches would fail to meet four-star criteria due to seat pitch, whereas someone's 10-year-old vehicle might get in," said Jimmy King, tour services director. "The system doesn't address other coach facilities and certainly doesn't reflect the fact we run four-star tours."

Mr King said Shearings will be making its feelings known and become involved with the consultation process.

▼ Coach

UK co get st

Long-awaited

STAR rating for UK coaches may be on its way, says the Confederation of Passenger Transport.

The long-awaited approval from the Patent Office has come through, after a complicated process which has taken more than four years but should ensure the scheme is unique.

The CPT is now compiling a consultation document for members which,

Success w

THE Coach Tourism Council says the issue of star rating has been discussed several times at CTC board level, but the general feeling is that it

▼ Coach

Raglan inquest delay

AN inquest into the deaths of 10 people who died in the Raglan coach crash last year has been adjourned pending the appearance of the driver and operator in court. Gwent coroner David Bowen gave no date for resumption of the inquest, since the case against driver Philip Crisp and operator Ronald Lewis is not due to be answered until 25 September, at Abergavenny Magistrates Court. Mr Crisp faces 10 charges of causing death by dangerous driving, and Mr Lewis four related charges.

▼ Coach and Bus

'Yes' to show

COACH and Bus Live, the race-circuit based show backed by *CBW* and organised by EMAP Automotive's events department, has been given a massive vote of confidence by those who will ensure its success — operators.

In a survey of coach and bus operators who subscribe to *CBW* over 95 per cent have given *Coach and Bus Live* the thumbs up.

Inspired by news in *CBW* since its launch earlier this Summer (*CBW*, 29 June), operators say they are determined to be present and, in an overwhelming YES vote, say they will go to *Coach and Bus Live* and make buying decisions.

■ **See page 10**

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North Sea Ferries bought by P&O

NORTH Sea Ferries, the Hull operator to Europoort and Zeebrugge, has been bought by P&O European Ferries. P&O has paid £25.25 million for Dutch shipping company Nedlloyd's 50 per cent interest in North Sea Ferries and will merge the company with its operation in Felixstowe to form a new operating company, P&O North Sea Ferries.

More than 100 jobs will be lost by integrating the port functions in Europoort and Zeebrugge and reducing administrative staff.

Lord Sterling, P&O chairman, said: "This development achieves the twin aims of reducing costs by combining the North Sea Ferries and Felixstowe operations and strengthening our position in the market. We have always said that we would take the initiative in rationalising the ferry business and this is the first step."

In the first six months of 1996, North Sea Ferries carried eight per cent more passengers compared to the same period last year. In 1995, it made a total profit before tax of £4.3 million. In the first six months of this year, it recorded an increase in profit before tax of £2.9 million over the same period for 1995.

aches could soon ar-rating system

approval from the Patent Office has come through

by Mark Williams

together with views from elsewhere in the industry, will form the basis of the new system.

"One of the things we must do is present the consultation document in a form in which operators can quickly see how it will affect their fleets," said CPT coach tourism adviser Allan Edmonson. "When Belgium decided on star rating, it performed the same exercise and we have been using the Belgian system as our example.

"Above all, we have to be sure members want star rating, and we'd like to get the reaction from other sections of the industry."

Mr Edmonson said the scheme was very much in its infancy and the thorough consultation process would take some time to complete. The scheme will also carry with it some cost, and the aim is to make it self-funding but, as yet, the finer detail including the verification system have to be decided.

"It's early days and what we have to do at present is down to sorting out the paperwork. So far, the reaction has been very positive."

ill depend on criteria — CTC

has pitfalls.

"I think we must agree that anything which raises standards must be good for the industry," said CTC chairman Chris Wales. "The AA rates our ferries, and the tourist board rates hotels, as does the RAC.

"We shouldn't be frightened of being judged, but star rating as an issue produces mixed feelings. Its success will depend on the criteria, and the people judging those criteria."

Bob McLeod and Jim Martin of Hughes DAF

▼ Coach and Bus

DAF Bus backed

HUGHES DAF, the Cowie Group's Cleckheaton-based coach and bus dealership, is pinning its faith in the heavy-duty, long-life capabilities of the Dutch-built chassis range of DAF Bus International.

Md Bob McLeod confirmed the Hughes DAF strategy as DAF Bus importer was to take carefully measured steps forward into the marketplace with products he believes are fit for the purpose.

He said operators should take a longer-term view when making buying decisions, looking at whole-life operating costs rather than just initial capital costs.

Mr Mcleod admitted DAF Bus has a potential launchpad for future growth in the UK in the wake of the rapid growth of the Cowie Group to number two in the bus league.

Although all Cowie orders now go through Hughes DAF, a decision on group buying policy has not been confirmed.

■ DAF Bus launches a new coach and bus chassis, an LPG engine option and a revolutionary manual gear linkage while parent, VDL, opens new offices. Page 6

▼ Coach and Bus

Crystals calls in accountants

ACCOUNTANTS have been called in by Crystals Conversions, which is asking its creditors for extra time to pay after a poor performance in the last 18 months.

Md Chris Springham says the situation is a problem but creditors should be paid in full, and urged the trade and creditors to back his Doncaster-based business. He is hoping suppliers accept a Partnership Voluntary Arrangement (PVA) in which major creditors agree to defer the debt.

The formal procedure has the backing of Crystals' bankers and the local Business Link. The alternative is closure, with the loss of 30 jobs and limited return to suppliers.

"The problems we have had do not relate to the vehicles we are producing," Mr Springham said. Accountants say the business is profitable now, with a full 12-week order book, new management and working practices. "I am satisfied our conversions are well-made and competitive. But we have had management problems which have led to the current situation."

Accountant Steven Katz, of London-based HW Fisher and Co, has allowed Crystals to propose the scheme via a mail-out to current creditors.

To get the go-ahead, he needs support of 75 per cent of creditors.

The creditors' meeting is due to be held at the Nottingham Hilton Hotel on 30 September.

▼ Coach

Paul Dale Travel story

IN the Legal News section (*CBW*, 14 September), Paul Dale was quoted as saying "he had not realised the necessity of checking tightness of nuts with a torque wrench." We accept this comment was made by Mr Dale in the context of a single vehicle and in the circumstances explained in the article, and was not meant to reflect maintenance policy at Paul Dale Travel or to imply ignorance of the use of a torque wrench. CBW

● ● ● INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ● ● ● INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ● ● ● INSIDE TRANS

News
Stagecoach continues to hog the headlines. After submitting the only bid which safeguarded jobs, the super group is now the proud owner of 65-vehicle Hyndburn. Burnley Council, however, remains committed to public ownership. Still, never mind — negotiations have resulted in a working agreement, there's been more success in rail privatisation and a big win in Europe. Stagecoach has been named preferred bidder for the Isle of Wight's Island Line rail franchise and is poised to buy Swebus.
Chairman Brian Souter has recognised the split between rail and bus operations within Stagecoach and announced a separate board for the UK bus portfolio to run alongside overseas and railway boards. Three senior bus managers have been promoted on to it.
It's all change, too, at Stagecoach Manchester, where the last of the original three directors departs this month and the company introduces another fare cutting initiative through its Magicbus brand. Is it going to work? What response is the competition planning?
Feature
Who really benefits from on-street bus competition? Noel Millier has been to Weymouth to find out.
Tender results
Full analysis of winners and losers in the latest round — £475,000 worth — of net cost tendering in Greater Manchester.
Analysis
With fewer, more powerful customers than ever, how do bus builders make money? Henlys manages it. We show you how.
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In brief

LPG since '94

LPG-powered DAF Bus citybuses have been running in the Netherlands since 1994, the first with 11.6-litre engine — two by Hermes Group in the chassis builder's home town, Eindhoven, and six a year later with Groningen municipal transport. This year 11 buses joined BBA on town services in Breda and Tilburg.

New low-floor

PREMIER SB250, the stainless steel-framed Berkhof-bodied low-floor bus for the Benelux market, weighs in at 9,800 kg. It has DAF Bus underframe and completely flat floor, allowing a third entrance without additional steps. Dordrecht city transport has ordered the first six complete with access for four wheelchairs.

Spain boost

MARKETING activities in Spain, one of the four largest coach and bus markets in Europe, have been strengthened by DAF Bus. Importer is DAF Vehiculos Industriales SA of Madrid and a dealer network has been established. One of the first major successes is an order for 25 SB 220s bodied by Castrosua for 2,000-vehicle EMT, the city transport authority in Madrid which already runs 262 SB 220s.

Digital orders

ALL coaches and buses from DAF Bus are now on the DAF Rapido electronic parts catalogue being used by over 400 DAF dealers. Rapido avoids the need for large stocks of parts but ensures rapid delivery, with less time spent searching for parts and fewer errors.

Sales in 1995

IN 1995, sales of DAF Bus International exceeded NLG 120 million (£48 million). About 75 per cent of sales were made outside the Netherlands, mainly in Britain, Ireland, Romania, Israel, Portugal and Morocco.

▼ Coach and Bus

New offices and vehicles from DAF

Plus slick gearchange for rear-engined coaches

by Mike Morgan

THE opening of prestigious new offices for DAF Bus International's parent, the VDL Group, was used as an opportunity to unveil additions to DAF's coach and bus range and an imaginative solution to the age-old problem of providing a positive gearchange on rear-engined coaches.

The opening ceremony led by Dutch transport minister Mrs Jorritsma before over 840 Dutch dignitaries, who were entertained with pride and enthusiasm, was in sharp contrast to the depressing future which confronted DAF less than three years ago.

Developments by the coach and bus chassis manufacturer come as a sharp reminder that, not only was the company rescued by VDL but, as a slimmer and fitter organisation, has products for the next millennium.

SB 4000 is a new coach chassis aimed at the power-hungry European market where longer and heavier coaches are in vogue. The established SB220 citybus familiar in the UK with Optare, Ikarus or Northern Counties bodywork now has 8.65-litre engine in place of its 11.5-litre power plant ...and a low-floor version will complement the low-floor double-deck DB250 first seen at the NEC last October.

However, a major innovation which sounds like good news for coach drivers is the DAF Bus Precision Gear Shifting system (PGS).

Two-cable remote linkages are notorious for being vague, sloppy and temperamental. Complicated electronic solutions have been tried with varying degrees of success but, in the search for a simple answer that improves life for the driver, fitter, bodybuilder and operator, a flash of inspiration took DAF down the road to a three-cable solution.

PGS is linked to a conventional manual ZF gearbox in much the same way as a two-cable system. However, the additional cable ensures that every movement of the gearlever is converted into an efficient pull on one or other of the cables. DAF says there's less stress on the driver and less stress on the gearbox.

CBW's first drive in a left-hand-drive 15-metre Smit-bodied DAF SB3000 confirmed the merits of the system. Gear selection belied the length of the linkage with positive, short movements.

Bob McLeod, managing director of importer Hughes DAF, is so impressed that PGS is to be standard on all DAF Bus coaches in the UK.

Prestigious new offices

Turnover and output rising

THE fortunes of DAF Bus are set for a dramatic turn for the better, with turnover and output both on an upward curve — despite a slump in sales during 1995, the second year under VDL control. With the strength of the acquisitive VDL group behind it since November 1993, DAF is on course for sales of 750 chassis this year compared with 600 in 1995. Investment in new developments has underpinned this improvement and an export drive reinforced the importance of other markets to the company's future.

DAF set to sell 750 chassis in '96

Although the new SB4000, three-axle SBR4000 and 15-metre SBR4015 underframes are unlikely to be sold in the UK — except perhaps for double-deck coach applications — their introduction continues the DAF modular theme and underlines 'heavy-duty' specialism.

Four-airbag rear suspension is claimed to improve ride quality but more significantly lower chassis height gives larger luggage capacity and space for bigger fuel tanks demanded by long-haul European coach operations. Engine choices range from 365 bhp WS 268 to beefy 428 bhp WS 315.

Bus chassis innovations reflect the DAF focus on low-floor and LPG alternative fuel development work. The prototype DB250 low-floor double-deck chassis unveiled last Autumn has been developed with the benefit of input from Cowie-owned London operators. An announcement on bodybuilder is expected shortly and first production chassis are nearing completion. CBW

▼ Bus

LPG unit an option

AN LPG gas engine is now an option in DAF Bus citybuses. The first is fitted in an SB220 used on Eindhoven town services and UK importer Hughes DAF says one chassis in the first batch of SB220 low-floors will be LPG-powered.

The new compact horizontal 8.65-litre LPG engine is a successor to the 11.6 litre on which DAF Bus began its pioneering work over two years ago.

Although using the same block as the diesel equivalent, the 231 bhp engine is specially developed for LPG power, using multipoint injection and detailed attention to heat insulation includes ceramic-coated manifold.

● For more developments see Alternative Fuels on page 45

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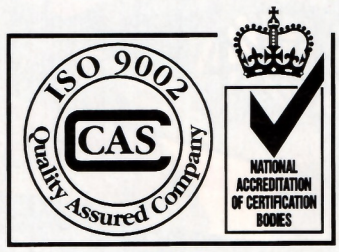

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▼ Bus

Guide Friday on trial in Indonesia

Lucrative orders on cards as Jakarta cleans up its act

by Mark Williams

RETROFIT LPG specialist Guide Friday has won a trial order for converted vehicles for Indonesia.

If the trial is successful, Guide Friday is hoping it will blossom in 1997 into orders for more than 2,000 vehicle conversions for Jakarta, using patented systems including a valve block designed by engineering director David Lampitt.

"The vehicles are Mercedes-Benz single-decks with lorry chassis," said Mr Lampitt. "There's room underneath the vehicle for a dinner party for 90 people, so plenty for the fuel tanks.

"Our first job was to find a quality precision engineering facility, which we've done, and the next to convert two vehicles which have already been made ready for us."

The work will take 10 days, involving milling the piston heads to reduce the compression ratio, drilling and tapping the cylinder head for spark plugs, finding somewhere to connect the ignition plate, and fitting the valve block, which will eventually be made under licence in Indonesia. Final checks will then be made for excessive exhaust heat, and shields fitted if required.

The drive towards a cleaner Jakarta is government led but, in a city which does not even have emissions laws, LPG supplier PT Otogas has started the stampede, having converted 450 taxis to dual-fuel operation, and is now looking for additional sales opportunities as it puts its pumps on to Jakarta garage forecourts.

Stratford-based firm's experience of LPG conversion has export pay-off

▼ Bus

Nottingham park and ride to be low-floor

DUNN-Line is to introduce low-floor buses to the car-driving Nottinghamshire public, having won the latest park-and-ride contract.

The three-vehicle operation, which runs from the fringes of Nottingham Racecourse at Colwick into the city centre, will be served by East Lancs Spryte-bodied Dart SLFs.

The 44-seaters are highly specified at the request of the council, but the pay-off for Dunn-Line is that the contract runs for five years.

"Apart from an MCW MetroRider bought some years ago, these are our first, brand-new service buses," said md Bob Dunn. "The council has been upgrading its park-and-ride site, and had set a very demanding specification in terms of the quality of vehicles on the contract."

Mr Dunn said the county council's Queen's Drive park and ride — run by Bartons — had been a big success. The result is that the upgraded Colwick service will be on a 12-minute frequency, from 7am to 7pm, six days a week. The vehicles will be delivered in early October. Two have the council's park-and-ride livery, and the third is in Dunn-Line colours.

▼ Bus

County launches SLFs

COWIE subsidiary County Bus has launched its three low-floor Dart SLFs, bodied with Wright Crusader, on route 395 in Hertford.

The vehicles are the result of negotiation with Hertfordshire County Council, which has improved bus stops and kerb heights and ensured access along the route.

The Lea Valley-branded service — running a circular route from Hertford Sele Farm Estate via the rail station, bus station, Ware Crossing and Ware College — is now on a 20-minute peak frequency.

The launch was attended by vice chairman of the council, Mona Warren, the mayors of Hertford and Ware, county councillors, and Cowie County Bus md Steve Clayton.

Lea Valley low-floors are now in operation

▼ Coach

Fife to the rescue

ROMANIAN school children on an exchange visit to West Lothian were rescued by Fife Scottish after their vehicle developed faults so serious it had to be scrapped.

After the coach from hell had made its final journey, the Kirkcaldy-based Stagecoach subsidiary supplied 49-seat Van Hools and two drivers to take the party to London.

It followed that by flying two fresh coach drivers to London for the return leg.

▼ Bus

Countdown to info

LONDON Transport's 'real-time' bus information scheme, Countdown, is to be extended London-wide and installed at 4,000 major bus stops.

The electronic information boards, which relay the bus's position and time of arrival to waiting passengers, have been so successful in pilot schemes, starting in 1992 with route 18, that a £2.25 million project involving five operators is next, and further schemes are in the pipeline.

Nag's Head Countdown sees the information boards installed at 170 stops, and buses equipped with location beacons. Twenty four routes are involved.

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In brief

Buses cleared

LOTHIAN police checks targeted on buses have produced less than five per cent immediate prohibitions. After checking 109 buses, the police found faults on 25 and gave prohibition notices to five. The campaign in Lothian and the Borders is to continue.

Belts fitted

NINE out of 10 minibus operators have already fitted seatbelts, ahead of legislation, an RAC survey has revealed. Though there were 18 months left to comply when the survey was conducted, the motoring organisation discovered that 87 per cent of operators had already fitted belts.

Rebate move

THE Department of Transport has moved its fuel duty rebate section from the second to the third floor of Great Minster House. Letters to the section should now be addressed to Fuel Duty Rebate Section, 3/09 Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. Phone and fax numbers remain unchanged.

Excel service

EASTERN Counties is launching its Excel Service on Monday (23 September) on Route 94 Norwich-King's Lynn-Peterborough. The project involves the implementation of a package of new service standards with a promise of compensation for customers if these are not met.

Rebate move

A NEW aid to help teachers instruct children how to behave safely on public transport has been launched by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Confederation of Passenger Transport. *Not Me* includes a video and teaching materials.

▼ Coach and Bus

Join in the race to Silverstone

Operators give the thumbs-up to a new concept in shows

by Mike Morgan

IN an overwhelming vote of confidence, coach and bus operators have given a decisive thumbs up to *Coach and Bus Live*, the new concept in shows which follows in the footsteps of the phenomenally successful Fleet Show.

According to research among operators, *Coach and Bus Live* is the ideal way to buy and sell vehicles. Over 95 per cent of all operators say they will be present when the three-day show lifts off on 20 March 1997.

When asked if they would be more likely to make positive purchasing decisions at a pro-active event like *Coach and Bus Live* than at a static event similar to those currently established, every single operator said YES.

Coach and Bus Live breaks the mould. It is a new concept, taking a race-circuit location and giving dealers and manufacturers the chance to display their stock and offer test drives. Now operators can view, drive and buy at one event ...and they like the idea.

The research confirms *Coach and Bus Live* is what the industry has been looking for. An important question asked by our researchers was: "If you are attending would you be more interested in new vehicles, used vehicles or both?" Eighty per cent said both, with an equal split between new and used.

Coach and Bus Live is backed by *CBW* and organised by EMAP Automotive's events department.

This massive vote of confidence by those who will ensure its success — operators — vindicates our decision to go ahead with the show.

The venue, Silverstone, gives exhibitors another dimension to a normal exhibition. Keith Dalton, director of EMAP Automotive and head of the highly experienced events department, says: "The show literally becomes live."

Mr Dalton said: "Of course, staging shows with demonstration facilities is not new but, until six years ago, such shows were usually run like garden fetes, under small, tent-type structures."

And Mr Dalton was behind The Fleet Show, the show that changed it all for the fleet car market. Now he is determined to do the same for the PSV industry.

Highly acclaimed De Boer semi-permanent structures to cover 27,000 square feet of exhibitor space will be erected. Their size is equivalent to permanent major UK venues - only better. They are generally more light and airy.

Coach and Bus Live will offer visitors the largest display ever of new and used coaches and buses. Test driving will be strictly controlled but coaches have access to the main race circuit and buses a simulated urban bus route. Minicoaches and buses will also be there.

Backed by the support of *CBW* and its readers, *Coach and Bus Live* will be the place to be. The venue is Silverstone. The dates are 20, 21, 22 March 1997.

The benefits are not solely for the operators. *CBW* publishing director, Mark Barton, explained that exhibitors have also seen that a live event makes sense. The show says goodbye to design costs and goodbye to build costs.

He said: "There will be no build wars at *Coach and Bus Live.*

"Instead of expensive design and build, manufacturers and dealers are offered packages that include shell scheme, phone, light, power point and carpet. It couldn't be simpler — or more cost effective."

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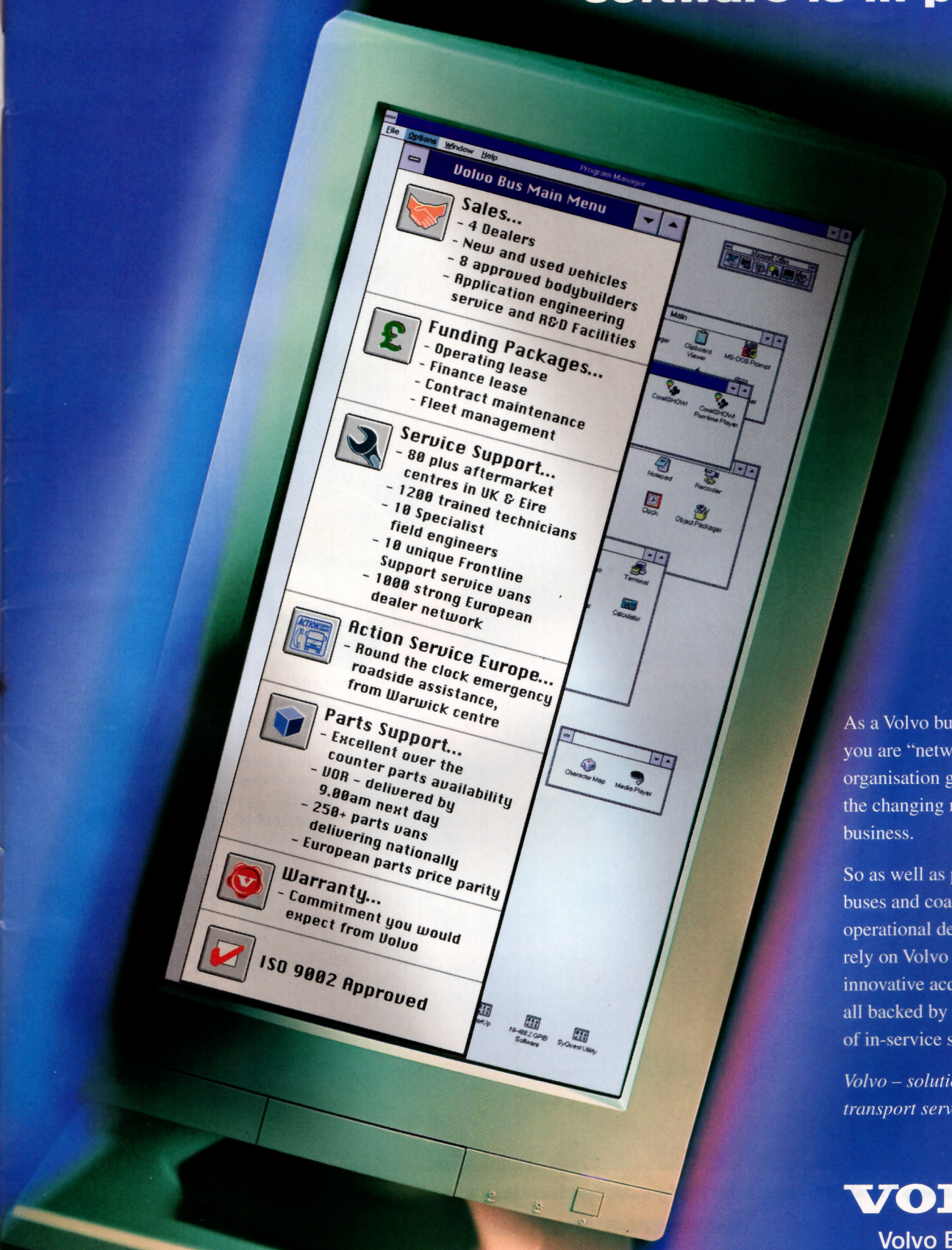
Volvo Bus Main Menu
Sales...
- 4 Dealers
- New and used vehicles
- 8 approved bodybuilders
- Application engineering service and R&D Facilities
Funding Packages...
- Operating lease
- Finance lease
- Contract maintenance
- Fleet management
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- 10 Specialist field engineers
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▼ Coach

'Coaches are

Bill Russell is steering the ship from a lofty bridge...but with a close eye on customers' needs

New md at Ye

ALTHOUGH the new boss at Loughborough-based Yeates is reluctant to put the label 'radical' on changes he has brought about over the first two months of his stewardship, visitors to the Volvo-owned dealership are left in no doubt that there's a new broom sweeping away some old traditions — and there's more to come.

For Bill Russell has been brought in with the task of taking control of the outlet which has been a key factor in building Volvo's dominating lead in the coach sales league table. It was felt that the operation had become too big in its own right and needed to be taken in hand by its own managing director.

Sales responsibilities remain with Tony Harvey but Mr Russell, 53, has been given the helm. As befits his position his 'bridge' is Reg Bennett's former office on the first floor of the Loughborough complex.

Strategically he overlooks one side of the yard and a swivel of the executive chair gives him sight of the most important people to a coach-focused dealership — its customers. And he is gearing the whole business to giving those visiting customers a warm welcome.

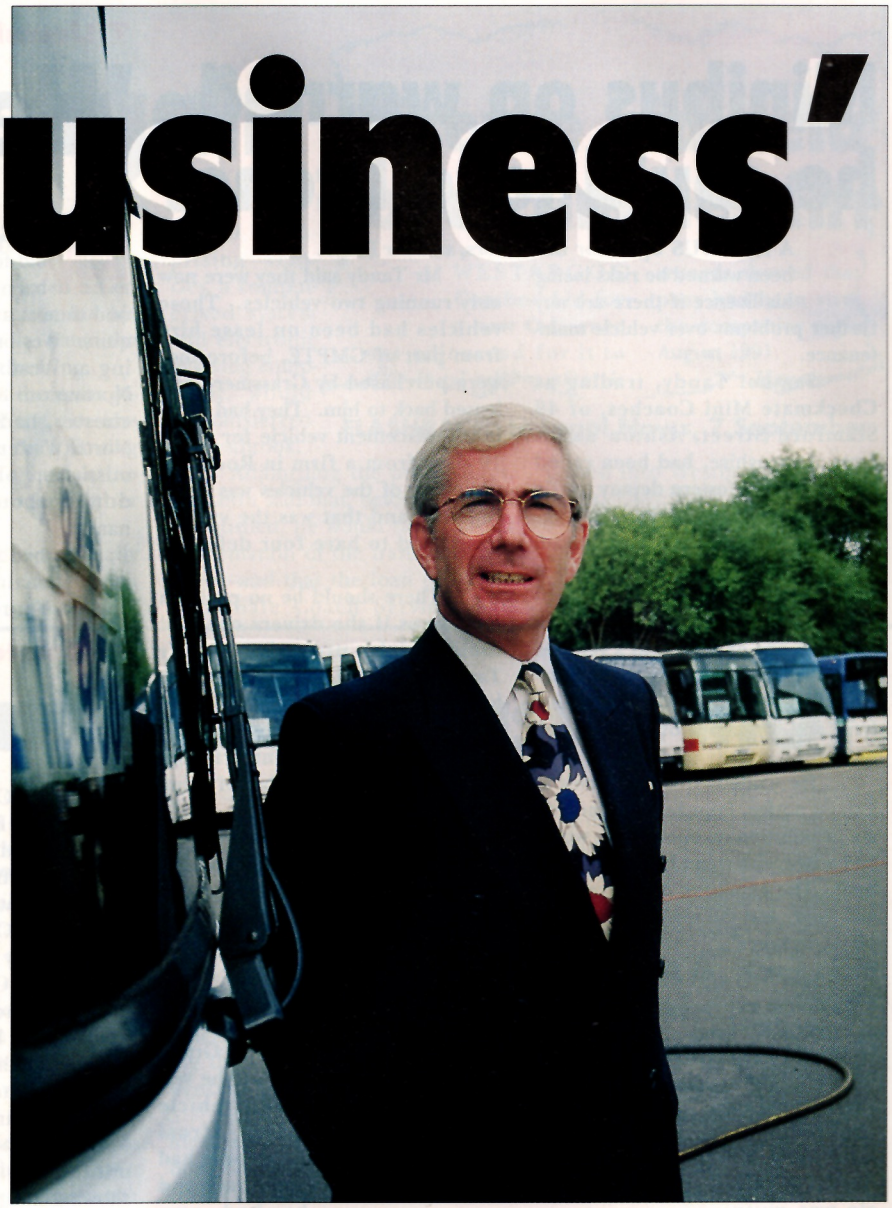
However, even before settling in behind the desk which came with him from his office in Warwick, Mr Russell has started the process by sweeping away the old and bringing a lick of fresh paint to tidy up the Yeates image.

He dismisses his

our business'

ates strikes at the coaching core

by Mike Morgan



Russell: 'The level of stock is not important...the rate of turnover is'

early initiatives as "housekeeping" but he has a clear view that his new job is a long-term project and politely rejects invitations to make early predictions. However, there are pointers of things to come.

Digger Taylor has been a point of contact for visiting operators for more years than most can remember — as have the mobile huts that sat in the left-hand corner. Yet the huts have come within the sweep of the new broom and Digger's life-long experience given renewed importance as one of the many Yeates staff with skills and knowledge of the company's specialism — coaches.

Already departed are two double-deck hospitality buses considered an irrelevance. And Mr Russell's determination will see the back of the re-engined Leyland Nationals.

It fits in with his quest to focus on Yeates' main function and follows one of his first edicts — to drop the Toyota Optimo dealership. "Coaches are our business," said the new md. "We've got the right people and we know the people in the business."

In Mr Russell's terms it's "back to the core." The policy is only new Volvo coaches with either Plaxton or Jonckheere bodywork. Yet the mix and level of used stock must, out of necessity, be determined by vehicles part exchanged.

Mr Russell said: "The stock we have is a function of being a dealer. The level is not important... it is the rate of turnover that matters."

But there are signs of change beyond just ratcheting back and focusing on new and used full-size coaches.

Whereas Yeates has for so long been associated with rows of coaches neatly lined up in used car lot style, with prices displayed in the windscreen, this precise admission of the value of used stock is now out of favour. No two deals are alike, according to Mr Russell, and screen pricing does not fit in with flexible dealing designed to accommodate the needs and interest of the customer.

And it's this second 'c' word which is being pushed to the front of the Yeates culture.

'The customer' joins 'coach' at the top of the Russell-inspired agenda, starting at the main entrance where a new gatehouse will be erected.

If you want chassis spares there's a welcome in the old reception area where a sign on a bell-push once read 'ring for service'. Carpet, coffee machine and seats now greet the 'customer' in the belief that service should be available without having to ring a bell.

In addition to a fresh look to the reception, kerbs have been painted, new signage erected and a specific area allocated to coaches awaiting collection by their new owners.

The sum of these small changes — and others to come — is clearly aimed at attracting more business to Yeates. As Mr Russell says: "It's the customers who will decide whether or not I am successful."

However, it is difficult to ignore that Volvo is not only Yeates' owner but the company name written through Mr Russell as though he was a stick of rock.

His first link with the Swedish company was forged in the distant days of Ailsa Trucks in the west of Scotland — a region which forms an integral part of his character.

After an unlikely start in textiles, Mr Russell switched to trucks, handling F86 sales to fleets. Meanwhile, Volvo took over and output from the Irvine plant opened up the tipper market.

Then, in 1981, the lasting affair with coaches started. He became coach sales manager reporting to Sandy Glennie. The B58 had been superseded by the B10M and Mr Russell had a new vehicle to take his career forward.

Progress after the 1988 Leyland deal lifted the quiet but forceful sales manager to director of product marketing — a position he was to hold for nine years, weathering the difficult years of product rationalisation in the process.

Although his career has inevitably led him to develop an expertise in systems (his wife, Jean shares his acumen; she's an office services manager for Britvic), selling coaches was his responsibility — particularly the larger fleets.

"I was very much in the selling business," he said. "I had to go out and do the job." However, despite the satisfaction of success in a business where people are at least as important as the deal, it was time for a change. He admits that the Yeates job came at the right time, presenting an opportunity for new challenges.

Mr Russell said: "My history is coaches and to get more involved is quite natural." CBW

▼ Maintenance

Minibus op warned he could lose licence

A MINIBUS operator has been warned he risks losing his licence if there are any further problems over vehicle maintenance.

Samuel Tandy, trading as Checkmate Mini Coaches, of 49 Stamford Street, Ashton under Lyne, Lancashire, had been called before North Western deputy traffic commissioner John Levin.

Vehicle examiner Graham Brock said he had carried out a maintenance investigation in April following the issue of a prohibition notice to one of Mr Tandy's vehicles which indicated inadequate maintenance, there being four defective tyres and a number of loose wheelnuts.

He examined two vehicles at a day's notice, imposing an immediate prohibition on one vehicle which had a tyre with tread below the legal limit. The condition of the vehicles was poor, and the worn tyre indicated drivers' checks were inadequate.

A total of seven prohibitions had been issued to Mr Tandy's vehicles, said Mr Brock. A vehicle was given an immediate prohibition in November 1994. Clearance of the prohibition was subsequently refused because of low brake performance. A second vehicle was given an immediate prohibition at a roadside check in November 1994, and clearance of prohibition was refused on three occasions because of poor brake performance. A vehicle was given a delayed prohibition for a fuel leak in December 1995. Clearance of prohibition was subsequently refused for low brake effort. A prohibition was imposed on a vehicle in February for defective tyres. Clearance of prohibition was refused for excess smoke and a worn bush. During a check at a bus station in July, one vehicle was found to be emitting excess black smoke.

The maintenance of the vehicles was contracted out and the vehicles were rented from the maintenance contractor, Grassmere Motors, said Mr Brock.

Mr Tandy said they were now only running two vehicles. Those vehicles had been on lease hire from part of GMPTE, before they were purchased by Grassmere and leased back to him. They had hired in a replacement vehicle for about 10 days from a firm in Rochdale while one of the vehicles was being repaired and that was the vehicle was found to have four defective tyres.

There should be no problem over tyres if the drivers checked their vehicles properly, said Mr Tandy. They had run a local service between Ashton and Denshaw, which they were not now running. He had two school contracts and had tendered for a number of swimming baths contracts.

He wanted to get away from local service operation and had got rid of his drivers. The intention was to run the business with his son Gregory on a smaller scale. He was purchasing one of the vehicles off Grassmere. The second vehicle leased from Grassmere had gone back and he had purchased a second vehicle from a firm in Staffordshire. Grassmere would continue to maintain the vehicles.

A prohibition notice was issued on one vehicle for four defective tyres and a number of loose wheelnuts

Mr Tandy said the vehicles were kept at Smith Street, Mossley. As from last Monday there was just his son and himself.

Mr Levin said there was no doubt the vehicles had been in a poor condition, which was very serious when they were passenger carrying vehicles, as it put the public in danger. He required a fresh maintenance agreement with Grassmere and, on that basis, he would let Mr Tandy off with a formal warning.

Asking the vehicle examiner to carry out a further check in six months, Mr Levin made it plain that, if his vehicles were found to be in a bad condition again, Mr Tandy would run the risk of having his licence revoked. He said that, for someone with two or three vehicles, Mr Tandy had rather a black record.

▼ Licensing

Westbrook bid

Commissioner wants

by Michael Jewell

WESTBROOK Coaches' bid for a new O-licence has been adjourned for the second time at a Manchester public inquiry. Westbrook (Euro) Ltd, trading as Westbrook Coaches, of 12 Normanton Avenue, Salford, Manchester, had been called before North Western deputy traffic commissioner John Levin because of doubts about the company's finance.

It had initially applied for a new national licence for four single deckers but reduced the authorisation sought to two vehicles during the hearing. The proceedings were adjourned on the first occasion to enable Westbrook to take legal advice after it was revealed the company backing it financially, Sale Coach Services Ltd, had been struck off five years ago (*CBW*, 7 September).

When the hearing was resumed, Westbrook's transport manager Graham Hanmer said research

▼ Maintenance

Community Bus Pro

LINCOLNSHIRE Community Bus Project has had a condition placed on its Community Bus Permit preventing it from operating its minibus until it has passed a Class 5 MoT test.

Spilsby Community Bus Project, of Post Office, Great Steeping, Spilsby, Lincolnshire, had been called before Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd because of concern over its maintenance standards following the issue of a prohibition notice to the minibus which was endorsed as showing a significant maintenance failure. None of the project's officials appeared at a Cambridge disciplinary inquiry.

Brigadier Boyd said it was always disturbing when an operator failed to attend a public inquiry, so they could test the evidence from the Vehicle Inspectorate and to put their version of the past, the present and the future. The court clerk, Maureen Smith, said the project was sent a letter calling it to the public inquiry in July. Two or three days later the co-ordinator, Mr T Wiltshire, telephoned to say he would not be attending and asked why he had not been consulted about the date. He was advised to write in if he wanted an adjournment.

Mr Wiltshire was given similar advice when he made a second telephone call to another member of staff. On 21 August a letter was received from Mr Wiltshire requesting an adjournment, saying he had to attend an inquest in Poland over the death of a parachutist friend be-

Community minibuses subjec

cause he had been the pilot of the aircraft from which his friend had jumped. Brigadier Boyd said he refused that request because there were two other members of the project, the secretary and the treasurer, and this was a road safety matter.

Mrs Smith said a letter was then sent by recorded delivery and by ordinary post, saying the public inquiry would go ahead. The recorded delivery letter was refused. She had been unable to contact either the secretary or treasurer since.

Brigadier Boyd said a further letter had been received from Mr Wiltshire saying he was surprised the vehicle examiner had sought to arrange a pre-public inquiry inspection at a date which he knew was impossible, saying he thought the vehicle examiner was trying to put the project in the worst possible light, bearing in mind the only reason for the inquiry was a broken bolt in a

is adjourned again

rmal confirmation of assets transfer and loan

had proved Sale Coach Services had, indeed, been struck off in 1991 for not submitting any accounts. It was not known the company had been struck off and it had since been reinstated.

He had been a director of Sale Coach Services for a number of years. The company had changed its accountants and its registered address and, as a result, all the company's correspondence had gone to the wrong address.

Mr Hanmer produced a Certificate of Re-incorperation but Mr Levin said he noted it was dated the day before the present hearing.

Mr Hanmer said there was going to be a meeting of the directors of Sale Coach Services the following evening to formally reinstate the loan to Westbrook, among other matters.

Westbrook had not actually had the money from Sale Coach Services as yet. Assets to the value of £7,500, comprising vehicles, a computerised system and electronic ticketing equipment, would be transferred to Westbrook.

Adjourning the proceedings, Mr Levin said that, before he could be satisfied, he would need formal confirmation of the transfer of the assets, and that the loan of £3,500 from Sale Coach Services had passed into Westbrook's bank account.

If confirmation was forthcoming, and he was satisfied by the documentation, it was likely the licence would be granted.

▼ Licensing

Licence bid dela over finance firr

WESTBROOK Coaches' bid for a new O-licence was adjourned for it to gal adv after it records showed that pany had been stru the companies regist August 1991.

Hanmer

FLASHBACK: to Legal News, 7 September

ject minibus banned until Class 5 MOT

o commissioner's jurisdiction

seat on a vehicle not being used at the time.

DoT vehicle examiner John Wright said the project operated one 16-seat minibus. A colleague carried out a maintenance investigation in August 1993 and the vehicle was found to be satisfactory. However, it was found that the nominated maintenance contractor was not being used, it being said that the maintenance was being carried out by a different commercial garage.

There were no inspection records available from either garage. The Traffic Area Clerk wrote to the project in January 1994, expressing concern about the failure to notify the change of contractor and reminding Mr Wiltshire of the need to keep inspection records for 15 months. He had carried out a maintenance investigation in May, said Mr Wright. He inspected the minibus and issued it with an immediate prohibition for three defects. A seat was insecure with a bolt missing from the mounting and there were fractured seat back rests on two other seats.

He also issued a defect notice for a number of lighting defects, and a windscreen wiper blade was too large for the windscreen. Inspections were stated to be carried out at intervals of 2,000 miles or four weeks. However, the inspection records over the previous 15 months revealed intervals ranged from nine to 13 weeks, with gaps of as much as 3,600 miles.

All the inspection records were signed by Mr Wiltshire, who said the commercial garage had gone out of business some time previously. None of the inspection sheets recorded any defects.

Mr Wiltshire had said he ticked the sheets after rectifying any defects, claiming he was a pilot and an aircraft engineer and that was the way it was done with aircraft. He also said that, because of the low mileage, he was proposing increasing the inspection period to eight weeks or 2,000 miles.

The facilities were far from ideal, said Mr Wright, with inspections being carried out on a rough concrete patch next to the Post Office. In a subsequent telephone conversation, Mr Wiltshire had told him he had made improvements to the maintenance facilities but, said Mr Wright, he did not know what they were.

In reply to the commissioner, Mr Wright said he had tried to arrange a pre-public inquiry inspection but Mr Wiltshire had twice denied him access to the vehicle. When he had pointed out there were two other project officials, Mr Wiltshire had said they would both be away as well.

Adjourning the proceedings to a date to be fixed when he would require Mr Wiltshire to attend, Brigadier Boyd said he did not feel there was any reasonable excuse for the Project not being represented.

If Mr Wiltshire was in Poland, he would have expected one or the other of the other two members of the project to have attended. He had heard serious things from the Vehicle Inspectorate, not only about the condition of the vehicle but also about a fallible rather than a vigorous support system.

Mr Wright was not a confrontational person in any way. Mr Wiltshire had another view which he did not accept. When it was a question of maintenance, he had to consider the safety of the public. The only powers he had were either to issue a warning or revoke the permit. He wanted to see Mr Wiltshire but, meanwhile, because of public safety, he did not want the vehicle to operate. Consequently, he was placing a condition on the permit to the effect the vehicle must not be used until it had been the subject of a Class 5 test.

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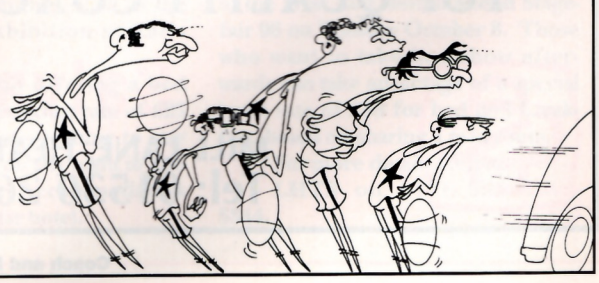

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▼ Europe

Le Shuttle bookings starts

New system a boost for operators

by William Golden

A NEW state-of-the-art reservations system for coaches was launched by Le Shuttle this week, allowing operators to book a specific departure for the first time. It came on line on Monday for vehicles travelling from Monday, 30 September.

Confirmed departure times to coaches are being implemented to speed up the flow of coaches through the terminal and on to Le Shuttle. It will enable operators to accurately plan itineraries and will reduce waiting time to a minimum at peak periods.

Paul Cowgill, UK passenger sales director of Le Shuttle, said the new system was another move towards giving coach operators and drivers the product they need. He said: "The turn up and go element of our service has concerned some operators and even those satisfied with the product have expressed a preference for pre-booked departures.

"We are very much a customer-led operation and, in order for our coach business to continue to be successful, we must answer our operators' needs."

Under the new system, operators will see considerable changes in the documentation they receive when booking. The easy-to-read computerised information will include a Provisional Confirmation faxed at the time of booking, detailing the date and time of departure. This is followed by an 'Option Reminder' six weeks prior to travel, advising that the booking will be automatically confirmed. An invoice is then sent four weeks before travel, followed by a three-portion ticket 14 days prior to the departure date. Operators making late bookings, ie those confirmed less than seven days before travel, will be issued with a 'Ticket on Departure' to be collected at the terminal.

The handling arrangements for coaches on the terminal have also been improved. Drivers will now check in 25 minutes before their pre-booked departure time, at new booths situated after frontier controls. Boarding will then begin almost immediately. Coaches arriving before or after their booked time will be accommodated on the next available shuttle.

The reservations system is being supported by a new *Coach Operators Guide to Le Shuttle* which is being distributed to all existing account holders.

For bookings or more information operators should contact Le Shuttle Coach Ticket Sales Line on 01303 272770.

Watch this space: operators guaranteed bookings on Le Shuttle

▼ UK and Europe

New sales manager

New role: manager Peter Wilson

PETER Wilson has joined wholesaler Groupways Leisure as national sales development manager. Mr Wilson, 36, has been working in the group, incentive and wholesale market for the past 15 years.

He said: "This is a terrific opportunity for me to build on the company's already impressive growth and I look forward to working with the existing team."

▼ UK

Hotel deals are just capital

OPERATORS planning shopping trips to London can take advantage of a special £22 a night deal from London Hotels & Travel Services (LHTS).

The bargain bed and breakfast rate is available at the three-star Novotel, in Hammersmith, on any Sunday night between 1 October and 6 April 1997. It will appeal to groups planning trips to the January sales - many shops are open on Sunday - or attending major events, such as the Ideal Homes Exhibition at Earls Court in March.

LHTS is also offering a bed and Continental breakfast rate of £25 per person to groups wishing to stay in central London on any night in January or February. Accommodation will be in a three-star hotel.

Theatre trips to the capital are also popular and LHTS has a Winter programme of theatre packages. Top tickets for *Jesus Christ Superstar* or *Martin Guerre*, plus overnight accommodation in a three-star central hotel, are available from £61 per person. Overnight packages are also available to see Sir Cliff Richard in *Heathcliff* and *Riverdance*.

Operators who want to learn more about forthcoming attractions in the West End should attend Stagefair 96 on Tuesday October 8. Those who want to take in a show afterwards can take advantage of a special hotel rate of £38 for bed and breakfast, based on sharing a twin room.

For more details contact LHTS on 0171 938 5344.

CBW

▼ UK

Groups take centre stage

City's information centre opens

by William Golden

GROUPS planning to visit Rochester are assured of getting the inside story on the city's attractions now that the first phase of a new £1.9 million visitor information centre has opened.

The former British Gas showroom in the High Street also has a retail outlet, 100-seater auditorium and art gallery. It has quickly proved popular - more than 5,800 people went through the doors over the August bank holiday weekend.

The second phase, which should be completed by Easter, includes a coach drop-off and pick-up point, a large meeting area for groups and a new interpretation centre.

Huw Jarvis, Rochester upon Medway City Council's head of tourism and marketing, said: "This is an exciting new development for the city. When phase two - the new coach drop-off point is in place - we will have a flagship development which will be one of the biggest and best in the country. It will further emphasise the commitment of the area towards developing tourism."

Open for business: the new tourist information centre in Rochester

▼ Europe

New ferry coach route

A NEW coach-carrying ferry comes into operation on Hoverspeed's Folkestone-Boulogne service next month. The Picasso, a ro-ro ferry owned by parent company Sea Containers, has space for 60 coaches and will make three return crossings a day. Operators will be charged between £150 and £250 for each vehicle.

Hoverspeed currently runs a limited coach-carrying service on its two hovercraft on the Dover-Calais route.

▼ Worldwide

Morocco bound

MOROCCO and Turkey are among 11 new tour options in the 1997 Tourama coach tour programme from Cosmos.

Prices for eight-day Jewels of Morocco tours start at £398, while an eight-day Highlights of Turkey tour costs from £427. Fly-cruise options include a 10-day Italy and Olympic Treasures cruise from £719. Discounts are available for parties of 15 or more and single passengers can save on supplements through a "guaranteed share" system.

CBW

▼ Europe

Route to special Christmas deals

SPECIAL rates for Christmas and New Year packages are being offered to operators by En Route, the travel-by-coach holiday company, to Austria, Belgium, France, Holland and Spain.

The three to eight-day breaks include traditional fare and festivities, excursions and sightseeing. One-way or return travel by Eurostar is available on breaks to Paris and Brussels.

En Route also has a programme of pre-Christmas offers, including evening cross-Channel cruises and champagne lunches on the Orient Express. The cruise packages include Christmas dinner and entertainment, while the Orient Express offer includes a champagne lunch and an overnight stay in a top London hotel.

Contact En Route on 01303 261605 for more details.

Eurowatch

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	14C/57F	Madrid	14C/57F
Athens	27C/81F	Oslo	11F/52F
Berlin	14C/57F	Paris	16C/61F
Brussels	15C/59F	Rome	24C/75F
Dublin	15C/59F	Stockholm	10C/50F
Lisbon	20C/68F	Vienna	17C/63F
Luxembourg	15C/59F	Zurich	17/63F

DIESEL PRICES

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.57	Luxembourg	0.43
Belgium	0.52	Netherlands	0.52
Eire	0.54	Norway	0.74
France	0.52	Portugal	0.46
Germany	0.51	Spain	0.46
Greece	0.43	Sweden	0.62
Italy	0.59	Switzerland	0.60

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	16.01 Sch/£	Italy	2,320 Lire/£
Belgium	46.85 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.55 Gld/£
Denmark	8.82 K/£	Norway	9.83 NKr/£
Eire	0.93 Punt/£	Portugal	234 Es/£
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1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 55R
1994 L EOS 90 49R, toilet
1994 L DAF WS3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF KS3000 Easishift Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Int Retarder, Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF HS2700 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L MB230LT Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF KS3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1933 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SM230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF SB2305 Duple 340, 57R
1992 J DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230 LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet

BUSES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1996 N DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF SB220 Auto, Ikarus, 49 seater bus
1995 M DENNIS DART Auto, 10M, Plaxton Pointer, 40 str bus
1992 J DAF SB220 Auto, Ikarus Citibus, 48 str bus
1991 H MERCEDES 811D Optare Starrider, 33 seater bus

1991 H DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H'
1990 G DAF SB3000 Van Hool 'H', 49/Toilet
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 53R
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH' 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51r/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500 , 52R
1989 F DAF MB 230LB Plaxton, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Duple 340SL, 53R
1988 E DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R

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1995 M MERCEDES 709, Autobus Classique, 25 str, bus seats
1993 K MAN, Jonckheere Deauville, 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB2700 HS, Caetano Algarve, 53R
1990 G VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1990 G DAF DHTD Duple 320, 57R
1989 G SCANIA K113 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 49R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1989 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1989 SB3000 Plaxton 3500, 51/Toilet
1988 VOLVO B10M, Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1988 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1988 E SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH 49R/Toilet
1987 E SB2300 Palxton 3200, 55R, air conditioned
1987 E DAF SB2300 Plaxton 3500, 53R, air conditioned
1987 D DAF 2300 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 49R/Toilet
1987 D DAF SB 230LB Duple 340, 53R
1987 D VAN HOOL T815 51/toilet
1983 Y DAF MB Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet

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Are all minis banned?

Q **I was stopped by the police on the M6 after I used the outside lane to overtake. I was driving a Mercedes Optare 29 seater with an unladen weight of about 4,600 kg. According to a very pleasant traffic officer, vehicles of more than 7.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight (GVW) and with eight or more passenger seats are not allowed to travel in the outside lane of motorways with more than two lanes. Is this correct? If so it would ban any minibus including self-drive and some people-carriers from the outside lane.**

ARB, Staffs

A Yes, that is correct. My questions are why did he stop you and why do you think this bans minibuses and other vehicles of less than 7.5 tonnes GVW from the outside lane? The important word in what he told you is 'and'. It is not coaches and buses that are more than this weight or with more than eight passenger seats that are excluded — both conditions have to exist for the ban to apply. Consequently vehicles with a GVW of 7.5 tonnes or less can continue to use the offside lane. This is, incidentally, in line with use by goods vehicles.

Unless this policeman's understanding was other than as you have recorded it — and thus wrong — I can only assume he was concerned whether a 29 seater would fall within the GVW limits — which it clearly did.

Is this restriction fair?

Q **Do you not think that it is odd, not to say unreasonable, that a person having passed a class B (car) driving test automatically gets D1 authorisation which permits them to drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats not used for hire and reward, yet the holder of a D1 licence obtained by passing a PCV driving test is allowed to drive a minibus with up to 16 seats for hire and reward but restricted to a maximum length of 5.5 metres?**

As most of the current new 16 seaters are over 5.5 metres long the choice of vehicle that can be driven for hire and reward by a tested D1 licence holder is severely restricted. I have written to the Secretary of State for Transport about this, but would appreciate your thoughts.

LT, Wilts

A What a challenge — to see if I can give the same answer as the Secretary of State for Transport! Well, here goes! You appear to have forgotten one important point which stands your argument on its head. The D1 authorisation conferred by class B is also limited to driving small PCVs. These are defined as vehicles with a maximum authorised mass (which, in relation to a PCV, means gross vehicle weight) of 3.5 tonnes.

Questions & Answers

Consequently the 5.5-metre limit for professional PCV drivers is more generous than the limit imposed on the untested non-hire and reward driver. If the length limit is a problem the solution now is as it always was when we had PSV Groups 1 to 4: take another test on a longer vehicle. Notwithstanding the fact I have turned your argument inside out, you may be interested to know that, because of the need for our Government to comply with the Second EC Directive on Driver Licensing, it is currently proposed that, from 1997, new D1 licences will only be issued after a test on an appropriate vehicle and satisfactory medical report.

Existing D1 licences granted as a result of class B testing will, however, remain valid until expiry (ie, when the person is 70). They would then have to pass the medical to renew the D1 entitlement. There are two further relevant points in these proposals:

Firstly, that drivers currently enjoying the 5.5-metre permission (as opposed to 3.5 tonnes) would continue to do so for driving in the UK, but would be subject to the weight limit in the rest of the EU.

Secondly, it is possible that drivers with class B entitlement will still be able to drive small PCVs on a voluntary basis for non-commercial organisations without taking a D1 test or a medical. While this category is perhaps slightly more limited than 'not for hire and reward' it begs the question why passengers driven by these drivers should not enjoy the same safety standards as those applying to 'hire and reward' passengers.

If Sir George Young confirms the latter to be the Government's intention you may well wish to engage in further correspondence with him to urge the 'level paying field'.

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154 Marksman will answer more questions on 5 October 1996

Have rules changed?

Q **When the traffic area sent me the fee request to switch to continuous O-licensing it asked me to send a month's bank statements to check my financial standing. As I have held an O-licence for more than 20 years I thought I was exempt from the financial test. Have the rules changed with continuous licensing or was this a mistake? (The question is academic as I did as requested and now have my new discs).**

EE, Notts

A No, there has not been any change in relation to this on the change to continuous licensing. If you have indeed held an O-licence and its predecessor public service vehicle licence continuously since before 1 January 1978 you are deemed, until the contrary is proved, to be of adequate financial standing (and actually good repute, too) by virtue of Schedule 3 to the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981. Paragraph 9(2) of that Schedule says you do not have to submit information relating to these requirements "unless it appears to the commissioner there are grounds for thinking that the requirement is not, in fact, satisfied."

On the face of it, it would seem you should not have been asked to supply this information. It may, as you suggest, have been an administrative oversight. There are, after all, a diminishing number of operators (probably now a minority) to whom this relief applies.

On the other hand there could be non-sinister reasons which could give rise to doubts whether the requirement was met. If, for example, you had increased the size of your fleet, or enhanced the specification of vehicles, or had invested in new or enlarged premises, or done anything which might reduce your available capital and reserves, if known to the commissioner (for which in practice read the Vehicle Inspectorate or the Traffic Area Office), then financial inquiry might well be justified.

It could even be that, if you are operating a trust account in relation to package tours, the available capital and reserves which are available on a day-to-day basis for the maintenance of the fleet could be seriously depleted.

This question serves to remind all operators that they do need to ensure that capital expenditure or other business development does not prejudice the sufficiency of their financial standing for O-licence purposes. Inquiry to ensure ongoing compliance with this 'must' to hold an O-licence might be made at any time.

SJ CARLTON

SECOND TO NONE

SJ SUPERDEAL

DAF 11.60 EOS, 1992, 6 speed manual gearbox, 53 reclining seats courier seat, seat back nets, centre sunken toilet, fridge, Webasto, air conditioning, double glazing, driver's bunk, fully carpeted. MoT 22.08.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Leyland Tiger 245 Plaxton Supreme V, 1982, ZF 6 speed gearbox, 53 fixed seats, power door, radio/PA system, livery gold/red/black stripes. MoT 09.02.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Setra S215H, 1982, Mercedes V8, ZF 6 speed gearbox, 53 reclining seats plus crew, Voith retarder, rear continental door, Webasto, radio/PA/cassette, wired for TV and video, livery white, maroon and black, interior blue seats, pink stripe, red curtains. MoT 30.04.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

DAF (11.6) LAG PANARAMIC 1988, 6 speed ZF gearbox, 49 reclining seats, double glazed, centre continental door, Driver's bunk, Telma, Webasto, power door, toilet, radio/PA/cassette, TV/video, drinks, fridge, livery white/orange & brown. MoT May '97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Leyland Tiger 218 Plaxton Supreme, 1982, Semi automatic 6 speed gearbox, 50 reclining seats, electric retarder, tinted side windows, curtain tracks, power door, radio/PA/cassette, livery white with red/black stripes. MoT 06.12.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Mk III Van Hool Alizee, 1991, 273 bhp, ZF HP5000 automatic gearbox, internal retarder, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, autolube, ferry lift, kneel facility, plug entrance door, centre continental door, half rear emergency exit, double glazed side windows with blinds, rear screen curtains, Ishringhausen driver's seat, courier seat, crew compartment, 49 reclining seats, lap belts, brown/orange moquette, mid section servery/fridge, toilet, Radiomobile radio/PA system, 2 roof air vents, forced air ventilation. Choice of 11 brown/orange, repainted white 2 pack.Variable MoTs.

SJ SUPERDEAL

DAF Van Hool LD SB2300, 1990, ZF 6 speed splitter gearbox, 49 reclining seats, centre continental door, toilet, servery unit, double glazed, curtains, TV/video, radio/ PA/cassette, interior brown/orange, repainted white. NewMoT

SJ SUPERDEAL

Leyland Tiger L10, 1989, Alexander service bus bodies, Cummins L10 ZF automatic, 55 seats & 24 standees, painted white. MoT 30.08.97.

SJ SUPERDEAL

Toyota Caetano Optimo II, 1990, 18 seats plus courier, manual gearbox, power door, radio/PA/ cassette, livery white, maroon seats, red curtains. New MoT.

SJ SUPERDEAL

1993 DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee body, 51 rec seats, toilet washroom, hot water boiler, curtains, centre continental door, choice of 2, 1 with TV/video.

SJ SUPERDEAL

Dennis 290 GX Plaxton Premiere, 1993, 49 reclining seats,courier seat, ZF 6 speed gearbox, toilet, fridge, servery, air conditioning, double glazing, fold down tables, lap type seat belts, curtains, seat back nets, aircraft lockers, 3 x TV monitors. MoT 11.04.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

1993 DAF MB230 Auto Van Hool Alizee body, 57 rec seats, curtain, rear continental door.

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Van Hool Alizee Super High, 1989, 32 reclining seats, plus 6 tables, GS 7 speed gearbox, double glazed, centre continental door, centre sunken toilet, Telma, Webasto, power door, radio/PA system, TV, drinks, fridge, executive kitchen, curtains, livery white/red. MoT 06.03.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Setra Tornado 215 HD 1982, Man engine, ZF 7 speed gearbox, Voith retarder, 49 reclining seats & courier seat, centre sunken toilet with continental door, Webasto heating, Sutrak air conditioning, servery unit with water boiler, front mounted fridge, radio/PA cassette system, 2 TV monitors and video, drivers bunk, drivers door with wardrobe and central locking, retrimmed and repainted white. MoT 06.12.96.

SJ UPDATE

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Tips for clowns

ANY drivers caught clowning around in Southport in late September will be summarily auditioned... says MTL subsidiary Southport and District.

The bus company has the job of ferrying clowns from all over the globe to Pontins Holiday Village, site of the International Clowns Convention. What's more, anyone still 'clowning' at the time of boarding gets a free bus fare.

So it seems timely to hand a few tips to the drivers and MTL for the Lancastrian festival of slapstick fun.

We suggest drivers pull hard on any red noses to ensure no drunks are fraudulently travelling free.

Watch out for those crazy orange wigs and extra-wide trousers, too... lots of bona fide greetings card salesmen wear them. And we think MTL should enter into the spirit of things. Time for the buses to get square wheels, and for the fitters to bung a couple of fireworks up the exhaust...

You can't please everyone...

WHATEVER was said about pleasing some of the people, some of the time was proven beyond doubt by Eastern Counties' decision to invest in 17, brand-new accessible Pointers.

Not only that, it is negotiating bus stop improvements to such things as kerb height, and a rolling programme of low-floor replacements to take Norwich into the new millennium. So who is moaning? Believe it or not, Bill Albert, the chairman of the local disabled action group.

His gripe is that EC has decided not to have ramps fitted. The company says it left them off initially, on the grounds that the ramp designs are suffering some teething problems. Patience, Mr Albert, patience.

Train and shine trio

THE trainees get younger every day, don't they? And so they should. This trio of girls putting the polish on a VFM bus is part of a group of 18 children invited to the Tyneside company's South Shields depot to get a taste of what it's like to work 'on the buses'. It might not herald a new era when all female bus company employees begin thinking about their job as a career, but it's a step in the right direction: "At present, women form about 20 per cent of our workforce and we are committed to seeing this percentage grow," says VFM manager Madi Edwards. CBW

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Forget trying to make mockery of legislation

From Alan Scoles

I read with some concern Marksman's reply to a question regarding taking a daily rest on board a coach (*CBW*, 24 Aug). His interpretation of the regulations reads more like a plea for the defendant in a court case rather than a responsible recommendation to members of a professional coaching industry.

Before analysing the precise words used and, in fact, those not used, would it not be better to consider why the drivers' hours legislation exists and what it aims to achieve? The intention, I thought, was to provide a set of common rules that ensure a driver has no reason not to be refreshed, and hence safe, while conveying passengers on a PCV.

Surely, therefore, a responsible employer should do everything possible to ensure adequate facilities are provided for a driver to take his daily rest? In my opinion this should mean reserving proper accommodation or using a bunk on a coach if one is suitable. Coach bunks, of course, range from high class on sleeper coaches to the more normal claustrophobic horizontal broom cupboards.

Marksman states that the regulations do not define the word 'bunk'. Why should they, the dictionary does that? From the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary* the definition is 'Shelflike bed against wall'. I do not believe back seats fall into that category and, if they were meant to, why bother mentioning bunks in the legislation at all?

If a full-width back seat is classed as a bunk then, in reality, the only coaches excluded are those with a rear offside toilet. Presumably, Marksman is suggesting that a driver could take his legal rest on a 1977 Bedford Plaxton Supreme or even a Leyland Atlantean double-deck bus but not on a National Expressliner.

I would like to leave Marksman with several questions to consider:

1) How professional does it look to the hirer when he returns to his coach to find his driver has taken his rest on the backseat?

2) Is an operator using this interpretation as a way to merely try to save accommodation costs and offer his driver additional untaxed expenses?

3) How can we promote the safe and responsible nature of the coaching industry if we are recommending drivers to sleep on the back seat?

4) Would Marksman sleep in the back of his car when away on business?

5) Would a train driver, ferry captain or an aircraft pilot be expected to take his rest on a full-width seat?

Please forget trying to make a mockery of the legislation and put more effort into ensuring that our industry gains respect from the media, the politicians and, most importantly, the customers.

Alan Scoles
Operations planning manager
Shearings Ltd
Wigan
Lancs

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Ltd
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154
e-mail: FrankF@automotive.emap.co.uk

Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie, first name and surname), address and telephone number

CORGI CLASSICS

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

Offended by letter

From John Shawcross

With regard to Marksman's column (CBW, 31 August), I also was offended by the letter from chief inspector Fleming (CBW, 17 August). I thought his actions are based on preconceived prejudice and that his subsequent responses go beyond the pale of what I would describe as acceptable policing. Consequently I have sent the relevant letter and article to the National Council for Civil Liberties who I believe are experienced in matters like this. More power to their elbow say I!

John Shawcross
Turbostyle Coaches
Crawley
West Sussex

Clarification, please

From Richard Delahoy

I'm confused! You report (*CBW*, 7 September) that Kinchbus has "shed all of its double decks" to give it the newest bus fleet in the country. Sorry to argue but, as recently as 20 August, I photographed a T-registered ex-Plymouth Atlantean which had just been prepared for service and another T-reg Atlantean, this time ex Nottingham, was at the Delaine rally on 24 August. Both deckers were in the usual immaculate appearance we have come to expect from the Kinch fleet, as were the ex London Titans running in Loughborough on schools routes in late August.

I'm not knocking Kinch, who set enviable standards, but can we have some clarification please?

Incidentally, can I add my congratulations and thanks to Delaine for organising another superb running day? Sadly, I missed the chance to sample the pre-war West Yorkshire Bristol K but the cracking run from Bourne back to Peterborough on Fowlers' ex-Southend PD3 certainly brought back some memories.

Richard Delahoy
Southend on Sea
Essex

Kinchbus 'deckers are for school contracts and not for local service routes to which the story referred — Ed.

Opportunity knocks

From Douglas Harrison

Marksman is absolutely right (CBW, 31 August). There is potentially a huge market for carrying bikes by coach and bus. In Scotland alone, the Scottish Tourist Board reckons that, in 1992-4, 100,000 tourist trips a year were primarily for cycling, involving 500,000 bednights and an annual expenditure of £15 million. (By contrast, British tourists coming to Scotland primarily for the performing arts, including Glasgow's Mayfest and the Edinburgh Festival, spent only 200,000 bednights and £7 million — Source: my article in The Herald, 29 April).

Since Scotrail is almost completely Sprinterised, and these trains can carry only two bikes per two-car unit (one in the case of 158s), the opportunities for major coach and bus operators are considerable. How about space for a couple of bikes in your new bendi-coaches, Brian? Scheduled services with provision for bikes in the hold, properly advertised, would, I am convinced, get new passengers on our vehicles, not least me!

Scope perhaps for a little collabora-

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All accommodation should be booked DIRECT with the hotel of your choice. Simply quote Coach Industry Awards when booking. If you require further help, contact Paul Buck at Bournemouth Tourism on 01202 451702

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tive design work between a major operator and a coachbuilder? There are huge markets, easily accessed through cycling magazines, the SYHA/YHA members' newsletters, independent hostels, and bike shops. An opportunity waiting to be developed!

Douglas Harrison
Senior consultant
Harrison Consultancy
Maryhill
Glasgow

Nice to see article

From Nigel Clews

It was nice to see your article 'PSV ten times safer than cars' (*CBW*, 24 August). It's about time the broadcast media had this as one of their stories instead of sensational publicity on the coach industry and put back confidence to the public.

Nigel Clews
Sutton Coldfield
Birmingham

Cardiff office 'must'

From David Fowles

Further to your article (CBW, 24 August), I am writing to let you know the views of the CPT operators in South Wales.

The existing situation with Wales split into two Traffic Areas is wholly unsatisfactory. Wales needs to be treated as a single entity as happens in Scotland. If the view is taken Wales is not big enough to have its own traffic area, it needs to be combined with another geographical area to form one Traffic Area within which Wales is encompassed.

The reasons for this are:

1) The culture, language and nature of bus operations in Wales cannot be administered from either Birmingham or Bristol. This is because of language and other difficulties.

2) The nature of competition in South Wales requires special qualities in terms of enforcement and traffic office staff who understand the culture, language and ways of the local bus industry. There is grave doubt that this would ever be achieved from such remote locations as Bristol or Birmingham.

3) South Wales coach and bus operators have developed a strong relationship with the traffic commissioner, his officers and staff over the last six years.

The traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh, was instrumental in creating this improvement and developing it further through his 'local' influence at the Cardiff office. Only by maintaining the presence of an office in Cardiff can this progress be protected.

It is, therefore, the view of South Wales operators that a Cardiff sub office is absolutely essential in any revised traffic area structure. To that end, CPT members are lobbying hard to save (yet again) the Cardiff office for the benefit of the travelling public and bus operators and their staff.

David B Fowles
Chairman
South Wales Region CPT
Port Talbot
West Glamorgan

Horses for courses

From Allan Edmondson

I was perturbed by the ire shown by your two correspondents in respect of the bonding of coach tour operations (CBW, 31 August). No single protection scheme is, in our view, "better" than any other, and depends on individual circumstances.

Let me offer a few facts relating to bonding:

- The generic term of bonding is a reassurance to some consumers who associate with this type of protection.
- It can be the cheapest option, depending on the individual circumstances of the company concerned.
- In five years of providing a DTi-approved bonding scheme, the CPT has had only one member failure – the costs of which were adequately covered by the bond.
- By being part of a licensed bonding scheme, members become part of a closely regulated group which has other benefits for consumers, such as our independent arbitration service.
- By being correctly administered, there is no reason for any bonding scheme to be any less safe than trust accounts.

Referring to examples of recent travel operator failures only unnecessarily creates a bad picture of a scheme that serves the industry well, and has done so even before the advent of the current legislation.

CPT will continue to advise operators of the best method for each case, including alternatives, if we think that is best for the operator concerned. Surely this is how it should be done?

Allan M Edmondson
Coach Tourism Adviser
Confederation of Passenger Transport UK
London WC2

Part of the problem

From David Wayman

I appreciate the comments of Tommy Bryceland and Ron McCullock (*CBW*, 7 September) but would make the following points:

1) I still think they are failing to appreciate the vital importance of the need for space-efficiency in our overcrowded, over-polluted thoroughfares. Unnecessarily large vehicles are part of the problem and not the solution.

2) Double-deck vehicles could have stepless low floors. Some of the earliest rear-engined 'deckers had 20 seats accessible without steps in the lower saloon. Stagecoach's articulated vehicles do not have low floors. (Incidentally, an alternative to lowering the bus floor is to raise the bus stop surface level, in similar fashion to how it's done at some new tram system stops.)

Unnecessarily large vehicles part of the problem, says David Wayman

3) Where passenger loadings are increasing, as in the Fife instance cited, double-deck vehicles or increased journey frequencies would be better than duplication, providing the vehicles are adequately filled.

Tommy finished on a lighter note and I shall, too. I don't know about **kippers** and I've no wish to **carp** about it but, in my view, there's no **plaice** for 18-metre buses and I think Stagecoach will realise this when they're **whaling** over a collision or two.

David Wayman
Convener
Oldham Transport Users Forum
Oldham
Lancs

A unique bon — the inside

A joint venture set to be launched at between two British suppliers highlights with far-reaching consequences for c manufacture. Mike Morgan re

Looking ahead: TVI chairman John Rook

THE design, manufacture and assembly of coach and bus interiors is set for revolutionary change in the wake of a new marketing venture by two of the industry's innovative suppliers.

Lydney Products, the Forest of Dean-based laminate specialist, has joined forces with Invertec, a leading design and manufacturer of lights and low-voltage inverters for use in coaches, buses and trains.

The new company offers design, manufacture and supply co-ordination for project management of complete vehicle interiors. Whereas the two partners have developed independently as the coach and bus industry recovered from the recession, the timing of the joint venture puts them in a strong position to capitalise on the huge opportunities abroad and those arising out of the post-privatised rail industry.

Invertec contributes lighting systems to joint venture

Based in Gloucester, the joint venture is called Total Vehicle Interiors Limited (TVI) and is a sales and marketing operation for the product ranges of both companies. However, both Lydney and Invertec will continue to operate as autonomous units and will receive orders, and invoice, in the usual way.

TVI's managing director is Invertec sales and marketing director, James Valentine. Synergies promised include benefits from the integration of suppliers, avoiding the need for manufacturers to deal with a plethora of companies. Mr Valentine says TVI can supply anything from a single light fitting to a complete ceiling or interior.

Bonding expertise goes back to World War 2

He said: "Our belief is that today's businesses are built around successful customer/supplier partnerships and we intend to continue to strengthen our relationships with our key customers. Our aim is to work hard at improving customer communication which will result in us both achieving our goals."

Invertec was formed in 1988 to design and manufacture low voltage fluorescent lighting systems for the coach, bus and commercial vehicle industries worldwide. Charles Valentine, chairman and father of TVI md James Valentine, said: "Continued technical development has been at the heart of Invertec's success and this process was boosted by the granting of a DTI sponsored "SMART" award in 1993 specifically to develop a new concept in inverter design aimed at the railway market. This has been successfully completed and the new products are currently undergoing field trials prior to a full marketing programme."

The company is committed to exports. Its systems are used by a large proportion of European builders. Invertec France Sarl was opened in 1993 and has a joint-

ding story

Expocoach new solutions oach and bus ports

Lydney supplies floors and partitions at the moment... the next step is complete interiors

venture operation in Malaysia to form Malaysian Invertec Sdn Bhd to service the company's extensive markets in the ASEAN area.

It gained ISO 9000 in 1995 as the first step towards a total quality management regime.

Its new marketing partner, Lydney, is located by the River Severn, near Gloucester, on a 14-acre site, with 300,000 sq ft of factory space. It opened in 1940 as a shadow factory manufacturing plywood for Mosquito aircraft and Naval dockyards. It became the largest British plywood manufacturer and was subsequently owned by the Mallinson-Denny Group.

Bonding dissimilar materials is Lydney's strength and over the years the company built a good reputation within the transport industries for the supply of bonded panels and floors.

In the late 1980s/early 1990s the business got into financial difficulties, primarily through its involvement in the manufacture and installation of access floor systems, resulting in administrative receivership in 1993.

In May, 1994, the present directors, consisting of John Rook, as chairman and managing director, Colin Thornton as operations director, John Guest as technical director and Nick Symonds as financial controller and company secretary, purchased the assets, order book and name, and subsequently the land and buildings from the receiver.

Mr Rook, whose wide experience in the bus industry started with Daimler and the development of the Fleetline, says the new Lydney company is financed with equity investment by Midland Growth Capital and working facilities by Midland Bank. The directors and management own in excess of 60 per cent of the business.

Now in its third financial year, Lydney is scheduled to have increased sales by over 50 per cent to more than £7.5 million. The directors project 20 per cent compound growth per annum for the next three years. Prime markets are coach and bus, rail, marine and Ministry of Defence.

Since the buyout, Lydney has developed from a make-to-print panel manufacturer to a systems supplier. Mr Rook said its objective over the next three years was to become a total interior supplier in the UK and overseas.

Although Lydney continues to manufacture plywood and is one of the last two British manufacturers to the Ministry of Defence and specialist vehicle builders, developments include Melminium, Lydneyform, aluminium honeycomb structures and the use of pre-prog surface materials.

Plaxton is among its customers, taking components such as plywood floors and Lyndeyform headerboxes and partitions for its Pointer SLF body. Other Lydney products include: ceiling systems; toilet; interior and exterior doors. All are ready to be assembled and supplied on a just-in-time basis for fitment directly into on-line vehicles.

Mr Rook is TVI chairman. He said: "As a result of the growth which has taken place, and the planned developments, Lydney Products needed to strengthen its sales and marketing department. We find in Invertec some very similar parallels and, as a result of working on a number of joint ventures, we realised it made business sense to have a joint sales and marketing organisation, hence the development and launch of TVI."

Lydneyform applications include driver's locker suite of components

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Make the day work for you

Mark Williams previews the forthcoming NEC show and helps you enjoy your time there

GETTING to the NEC for Expocoach on 1, 2 and 3 October is the easy bit - but making the most of the array of quality products demands some careful planning.

It's all too easy to flit from stand to stand, have lunch and a drink, and discover as the exhibition closes that you've missed out on some vital visits. After all, your visit to Expocoach should be viewed as a working day... albeit one with an enjoyable edge.

The best way to get the most from Expocoach is to pre-plan specific visits in the office - taking in all the 'must see' events, vehicles and stands, then divide the day into three parts.

Set aside the first part of the day to make your essential visits, making appointments with key personnel if they are not available when you call. While you make your way around, jot a note of interesting stands which warrant more time. Then, take a break before meeting your appointments and making others at stands which have caught your eye during the morning 'tour.'

Always reserve a little time towards the end of your day (or days!) for simple socialising. Expocoach is a great place to catch up on gossip, and talk to coach operators for a fresh view of solutions to new problems.

Free training when buying from PSS

HYDROSTEER steering rams are back... thanks to PSS Steering and Hydraulics, which has sole rights to the OE design of units fitted to thousands of coaches and buses.

Exhibiting for the first time at Expocoach, on stand A4, PSS is now manufacturing the assembled units and parts to OE specification. What's more, the company is offering free training courses for fitters to companies buying Hydrosteer products.

Take a turn round the Axial stand

AVE Berkhof will be showing the first Axial ten-metre Javelin-based coach on stand A3.

The Axial — tested first in *CBW* in its Scania version — is Berkhof's much-acclaimed thrust towards radical design. The backswept front screen and roof 'bulge' are retained for the 10-metre Javelin 245-based coach on show — this one built for The Londoners for tour work.

Also on the stand will be an Excellence 1000 midi built for a Yorkshire operator, Expressway, and the actual Axial that *CBW* tested in August.

Operators who want to talk over the technical design aspects can find a representative from the Netherlands on the stand every day, together with the sales team including David Waterman.

Tried and tested: the *'CBW'* Axial coach will be on display

Trio showing off their assets

SJ CARLTON is taking three stunning Neoplans to Expocoach stand G38, including Coach Stop's 'art on wheels' coach 'Mischief.'

The Transliner GX300 SHD with Dennis Javelin chassis (*CBW*, 24 August) is one of two ordered by proprietor Gail Hopes, the other being 'Solar Polar.' They share a high, 49-seat spec including air conditioning, toilet with Continental door, and kitchenette, and are to Tempo 100. The Keil seats have folding tables and magazine nets. The stand will also feature a tri-axle Cityliner for Ormskirk operator Holmeswood Coaches, with Euro 2 Mercedes V8 twin turbo, 381 bhp engine, and a specification which includes air conditioning. It's a 49-seater with seatback tables and magazine nets, driver's refrigerator box, and telephone with two extensions.

Making up the trio is Timeline's Transliner on Javelin GX300, with 53 seats and air conditioning. This one is an automatic, with ZF 5HP 590 box directing the power from the Cummins 300 bhp engine.

Art on wheels: Coach Stop's 'Mischief'

Touch of magic

WINNER of last year's Coach Industry Award for best Midi-coach, Autobus Classique, will be showing the all-new front design for Nouvelle on stand A3.

The 814D-based 29 seater will have almost identical bodywork to the other Autobus Classique exhibit at the show — the Mercedes-Benz T2W, on the Mercedes-Benz stand. The vehicle will also have a new, Black Magic moquette from Holdsworth and a quality sound system from Autosound.

Staff on hand for questions are Alan White, John Senior, Julie Roberts, Sarah Woodward, and dealership representatives Steve Peach, and Frank and Chris Chandler.

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Time to integrate

THE advantages of integrating everything with office-based computers are demonstrated at Newbury Data, on stand D13.

Its on-bus information system, Flexfare, is claimed to improve revenue streams and reduce costs, while integrating radios, destination blinds and other peripherals as well as giving 'live' information to drivers about the route and fares. It includes the option of paper ticket printing, magnetic and smart card handling, and can even provide advertising printing on tickets.

Give yourself a lift

GUESS the age of four Somers vehicle lifts on stand G46 and you could win a case of champagne.

The display includes three current models of lift and another which offers an insight into designs of the future. Even if you miss the mark for first prize, a set of six cut-glass champagne glasses and third prize of a case of wine should keep you in good cheer!

A product worth looking out for is Somers new scissor lift table, now supplied with an integral ball top table measuring 1.5 metres by one metre.

Harry Mitchell: familiar face at show

Get the low-down

VISITORS to Richards & Shaw's stand F85, will be confronted not only by the latest in UK seat design but the familiar face of Harry Mitchell, former Crystals Conversions man.

Mr Mitchell has joined Richards & Shaw as UK sales executive, putting his wide experience of the coach and bus markets to good use by giving operators the low-down on seating, such as the Kustombilt range.

"We're looking forward to meeting clients old and new at the show," said Mr Mitchell. Richards & Shaw is expecting to announce more sales appointments as pressure on existing staff increases with a packed order book.

Vision of the future

PROXIMETER provides a second pair of eyes at the back of any coach or bus for such low cost it could pay for itself by preventing a single collision, says the firm, on stand F12.

The proximeter sensor, comprising four transmitters and three receivers spread along the bumper, is activated and powered by the reversing lamp. Within the cab, the driver hears a series of bleeps which speed up and finally merge into a continuous tone if the rear of the vehicle gets uncomfortably close to any obstacle or person, including a passenger or staff member.

A special feature of Proximeter is that it can be linked to the familiar external reversing bleeper so that the pattern of bleeps is mimicked for pedestrians: "Tests show that the sudden changes in the frequency of bleeps really make people jump," said Proximeter's Stephen Franklin.

The system can be fitted within two man hours and, at under £250 for the basic system, could even be fitted to aid parking within crowded depots.

33 PASSENGERS, LUGGAGE AND OVER 500 MILES ON A FULL TANK

"Some people were surprised when I took delivery of the very first 'Nouvelle' midicoach to enter service, I had previously operated only van conversions, but after one year, carrying over 15,000 passengers, across 7 countries covering over 80,000 miles at up to 23 miles per gallon . . . I've just ordered my second 'Nouvelle'"

Peter Regan of Expressways

The 'Nouvelle' Mercedes Midicoach of the Year is available with 24 to 33 seats and comes with a 2 year mechanical and 3 year bodywork warranty.

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See 'intelligent' products

THEFT-proof school bus signs and 'intelligent' electronic destination blinds are among products on show at McKenna Brothers' stand A12.

The Manchester-based company claims its newly-designed school bus signs - in mandatory design showing children crossing - help eliminate problems of petty theft experienced by a large number of contract operators.

The firm's Powerblind system of destination signing is also explained in full, showing how its 'intelligent' capability makes it a more foolproof bus blind, while a demonstration of the computer technology which powers a vinyl cutter is backed up with a 10 per cent discount voucher for vinyls and the chance to win a Minolta camera.

On the stand, directors Vin and Paul McKenna and production manager Malc Randles will provide a welcome for any inquiries.

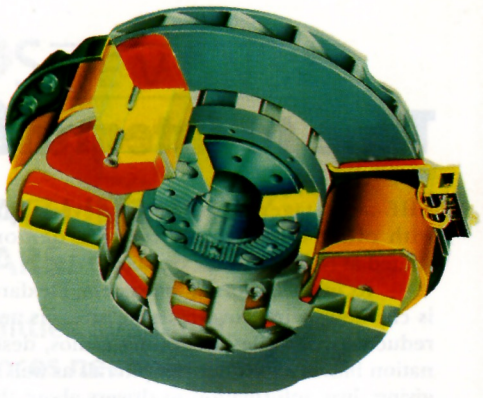
ControLaser 200: stand B19

Distance no object

FOG, headlights on main beam and simple losses of concentration cannot only be hazardous for coach drivers, they can lead to heavy braking and an uncomfortable journey for passengers.

ControLaser 200 systems, shown on stand B19, use relatively simple laser technology to continuously monitor vehicle separation to distances of 150 metres, providing an audible and visual warning when stopping distance decreases suddenly, even if the driver cannot physically see the vehicle in front.

There may be financial reasons for fitting vehicles, too, now that Germany is enforcing minimum separation distance on its major roads with on-the-spot fines. What's more, the unit can be pre-set with warnings for statutory speed limits.



Put brake on costs

TELMA'S range of electromagnetic retarders is well known in the coach industry but the savings they can make on braking components and even tyre wear are not always recognised.

On stand G41, you can find out how units like Telma Focal retarder can reduce brake use by 85 per cent, simultaneously extending the life of a wide range of running gear components which are stressed by heavy braking.

The safety aspect of Telma's devices is underlined by a presentation on opening day of the show at 11am. The Road Safety Council's Top Driver Safety Award is sponsored by the firm, and will be handing over the glittering prizes.

CBW

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Quality Certification is one of the big issues in the coach & bus industry and DNV Quality Assurance (DNVQA) is the specialist player in the fields of ISO 9000, QS 9000 and ISO 14001.

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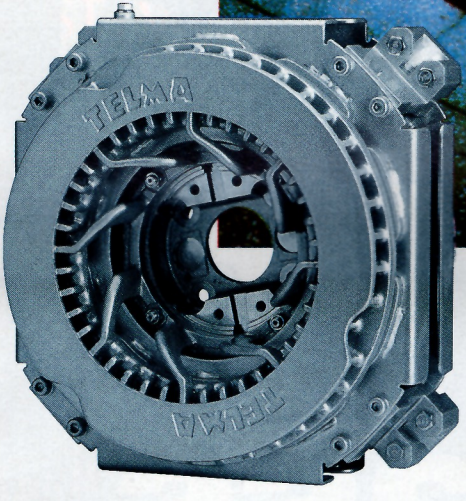

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Newbury Data	D13
Drinkmaster Ltd	D14
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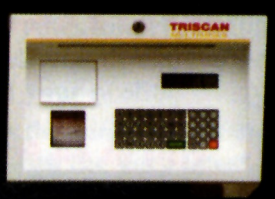

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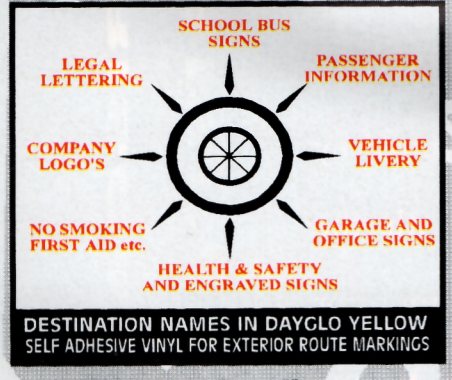

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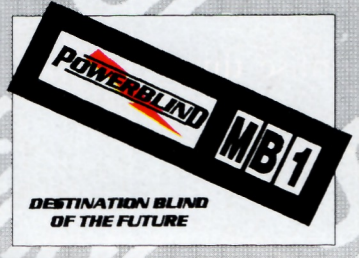

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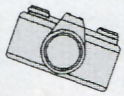

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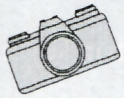

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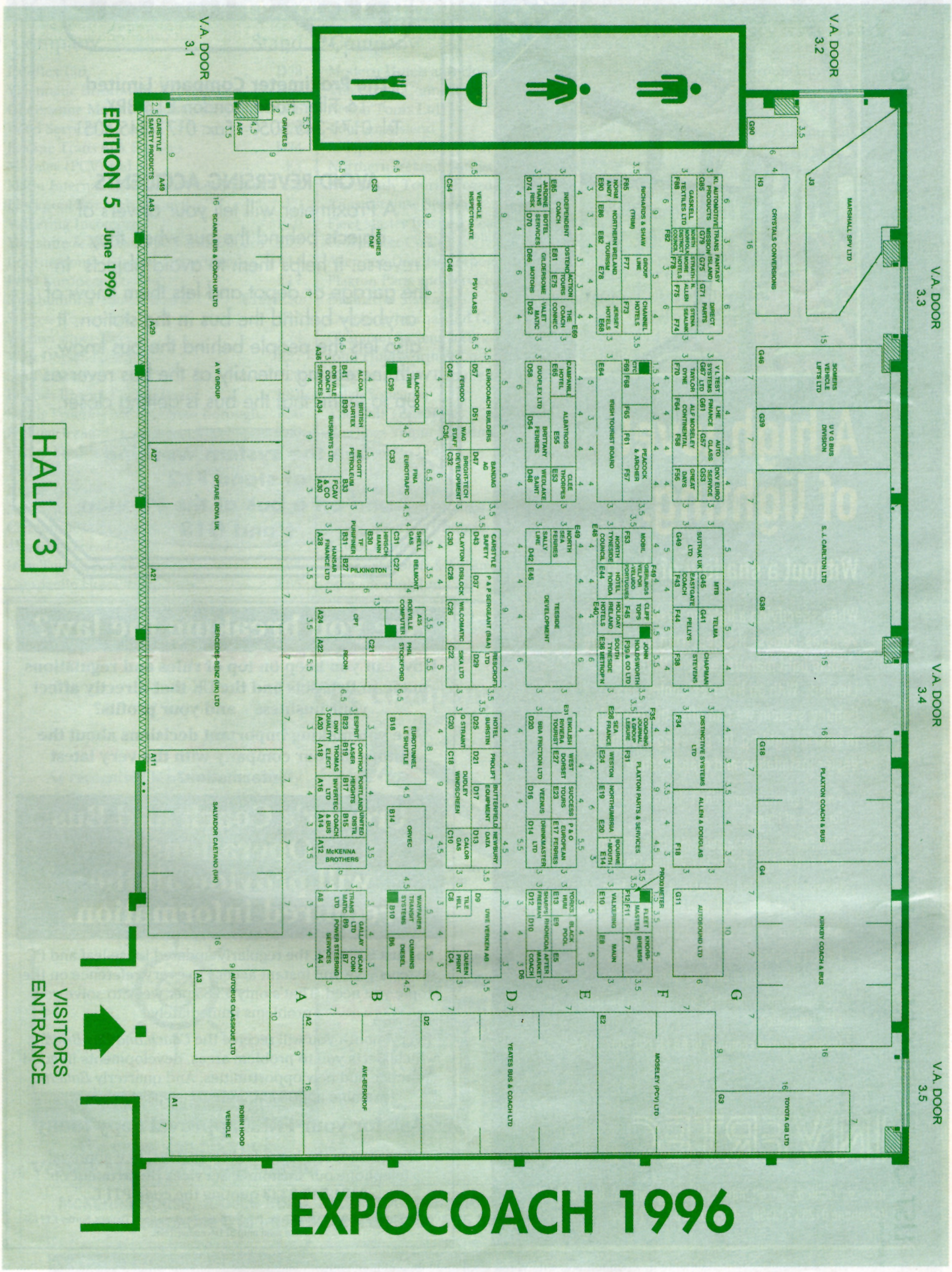
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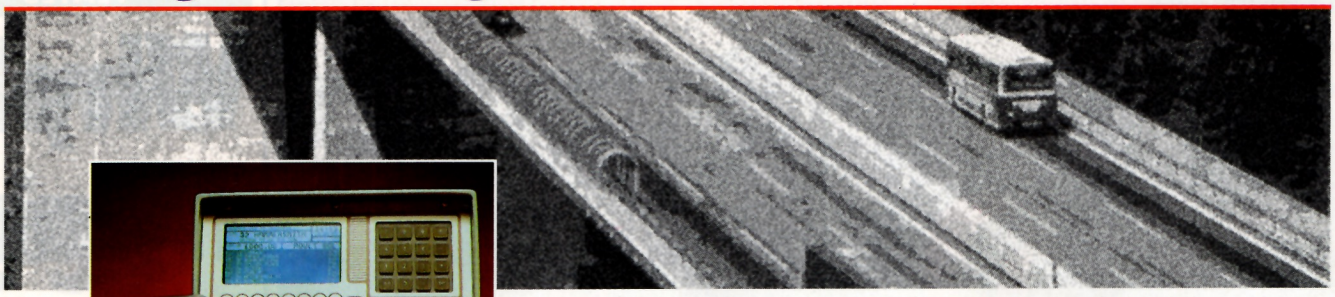

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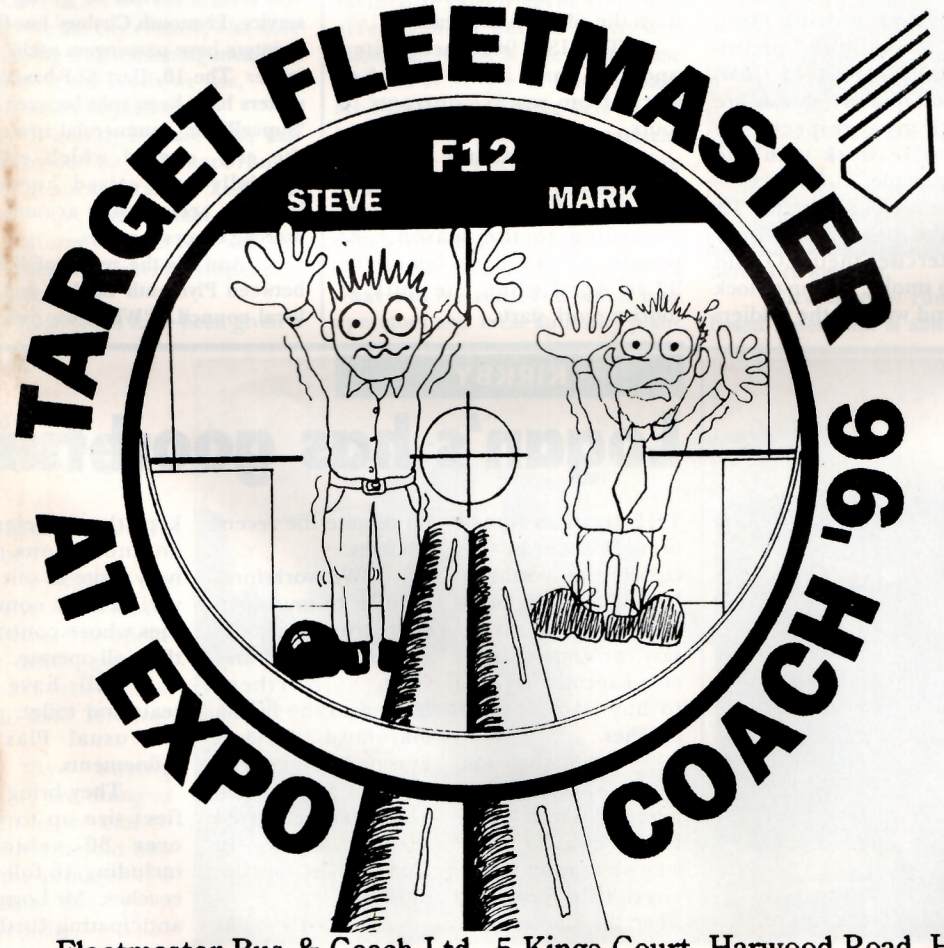

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YEATES

Why Sw flying s

Only the second opera Mistral body on

SWALLOW Coach Company is only the second operator to get Jonckheere's Mistral body on B10MSE chassis, and will have one of this pair on show on the Jonckheere stand at Expocoach (see show preview starting page 31).

The coaches — one 51-seat with toilet, the other a straightforward 53-seater — were

MOSELEY (SCOTLAND)

Maynes sticks with Van Hool

SCOTTISH operator Maynes Coaches of Buckie stuck with Van Hool for the latest two vehicles, and painted them in its 50th anniversary 'ribbon' livery.

The low-driver Alizees on Volvo B10M have 51 belted seats, toilet and video. They complement two Scania K113s with Van Hool bodywork bought earlier this year, and join 12 top-quality, full-sized coaches, none of which predate L registered.

"We use our coaches for everything, even putting P-reg vehicles on school work," proprietor Gordon Mayne told *CBW*. "We find that quality vehicles are treated with great respect. We have extensive work with the MOD, for example.

"When a group from the TA boarded the other day for a training exercise, their CO told them not to smoke, for me to lock the toilet, and warned the soldiers that they'd walk if they got oil from the rifles on the seats!"

The ISO 9002 accredited operator has a broad spread of work, from works contracts to tours.

Its fleet include 10 mini- and midi-sized coaches and buses, but actual fleet size varies according to the season. At present, it's 24 vehicles but can be 32 in April when the bulk of tourism work starts.

DENNIS

Plymouth P

WITHIN a month of going into service, Plymouth Citybus' low-floor Pointers have passengers asking for more. The 10, Dart SLF-based 39-seaters have been split between two 'SuperRider' commercial routes in the city, one of which enjoys specially-built raised kerbs to improve accessibility around the housing estates it serves.

And it's the result of liaison between Plymouth Citybus and the local council. "When we ordered

KIRKBY

Logan's has good run i

THE tourism boost brought about by the ceasefire in Northern Ireland, and the business's 25th anniversary, prompted Logan's Executive Travel to buy its first new coaches.

It plumped for three Plaxton Premiere 320s with Volvo B10M chassis, and was pleasantly surprised this Summer when the market held up despite the recent troubles.

"We work for a number of tour operators, running tours within Ireland, and from Northern Ireland to the British mainland and Europe," said general manager Sean Logan, whose father started the business in Dunloy, Co Antrim, in 1971.

Logan's has kept the vehicles in an anonymous delivery white to suit the varied tour companies whose contracts they will operate.

"All have 49 seats and toilet, plus the usual Plaxton refinements.

They bring the fleet size up to well over 30 vehicles, including 16 full-size coaches. Mr Logan is anticipating further,

allow's o high

or to get Jonckheere's 310MSE chassis

by Mark Williams

ordered by family-run Swallow almost the moment they saw the first example for Clarkes of London on display at Coach and Bus 95. And now they've arrived at the Rainham-based firm, they're every bit as good as they seemed.

"In our view, the Mistral is the best-looking coach for some time," said Swallow md Kevin Webb. "In the month we've had them, they've proven to be a lovely tool."

Re-positioning of the engine towards the rear has lengthened the B10M wheelbase and created a huge amount of luggage space. Because Swallow's business is exclusively private hire, with limited need for luggage space, that leaves room for a retrofit MAC~Hispacold air conditioning unit.

The Mistrals are a diversion from Swallow Coach Company's old livery, predominately white. The interior is colour-coded, with top-quality Israeli-made seats, fridge and video.

Swallow Coach Company was an established, two-vehicle company bought by the Webb family 15 years ago. Business is booming, says Kevin Webb, as demand for top-quality vehicles in the Home Counties increases. Swallow's fleet of 25 vehicles, 22 of them full-sized, is mainly E-registered and younger, including Mercedes-Benz, Neoplan, DAF and MAN coaches.

ointers prove popular

the Dart SLFs we discussed our plans with the city council, who were developing traffic-calming measures for one of the roads we use," said Brian Fisher, Citybus md.

"It quickly became clear that this provided an ideal opportunity to incorporate raised kerbs at certain stops, which would allow the bus platform to be in line with the kerb when the kneeling suspension was activated."

Eight stops have been given a variety of raised kerbs to gauge effectiveness before more are installed. "This is one of the first facilities of its type in Britain," said Mr Fisher. "Everyone felt it was important to gain some practical experience as a prelude to installing dedicated boarding points elsewhere on the route and then ultimately, on other routes too.

"It's an excellent example of what can be achieved when bus operators and local authority planners work together."

Citybus now runs 40 Dart-based buses, and is almost 100 per cent single-deck, a few double-decks being retained only for a few peak-hour and school journeys.

Ulster

new fleet additions in Spring.

"I still feel the Northern Ireland market and its operators don't get the respect they deserve," said Mr Logan.

"By buying new, we are doing as much as we can to disprove the old notion the province is a dustbin for old vehicles."

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DAB built 12-metre vehicles with SAAB 2.3-litre petrol engine used to recharge NiCad batteries

Low-sulphur diesel still tops — Scania

But alternatives on the agenda, says Mike Morgan

A DIESEL engine running on low-sulphur fuel is the best alternative for the foreseeable future, according to Scania. Its new OmniCity is equipped with a nine-litre diesel engine which meets Euro 2 emissions and the Swedish company says its goal is to further improve the efficiency of the diesel engine while at the same time reduce exhaust emissions.

However, head of Scania's coach and bus technical development and production, Per Hallberg, said: "As vehicle manufacturers, it is only natural that we develop our basic engine designs to run on alternative fuel, for example, ethanol and multi-fuel hybrid power.

"Buses with such engines will become an increasingly common sight on environmentally-sensitive urban streets, where exhaust emission and noise emission standards are becoming increasingly more stringent."

Of the 1,600 buses running in the Stockholm area on routes controlled by SL, the county council-owned company which generates 58 per cent of its revenue from taxation, the switch to ethanol and hybrid power has already started.

SL has set targets that will increase the number of ethanol-fuelled buses to 300 by the year 2000. By then the remainder of the fleet will be either fitted with catalytic convertors or running on city fuel.

Meanwhile, a seven-year development programme has culminated in the introduction of six petrol/electric city buses on the world's first hybrid-power bus service. Scania-owned DAB of Denmark built the 12-metre vehicles, which have SAAB 2.3 litre petrol engine used to recharge a bank of roof-mounted NiCad batteries.

Electric traction motors drive through gearbox and conventional rear axle. Pure battery power is used for around 30 per cent of the route with the engine switched off. However, outside the sensitive pedestrian areas, the naturally-aspirated SAAB engine running close to peak torque recharges the batteries and/or supplies additional power.

Development company, Thoreb, expects to convert the engines to ethanol, despite 'negligible emissions' from the three-way catalyst-fitted petrol engine. These first vehicles cost SKr 3 million (£300,000) each to build. Although their batteries weigh one tonne, the total unladen weight is virtually identical to a conventional DAB low-floor bus. Unlike five similar buses going into the Danish city of Aalborg next month, the SL hybrids do not have regenerative braking.

Scania's Per Hallberg

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1990 G MERCEDES TA2, Dubrava, recent exchange engine, 53 seats, power door, radio, PA, MoT April, 1997.
1987 E OPTARE CITY PACER 2.5 Turbo, 25 coach seats, power door, white exterior, MoT May '97.
1987 VOLVO B10M, Plaxton Paramount 3200, low driver, 53 seats, radio/PA, power door, long MoT.
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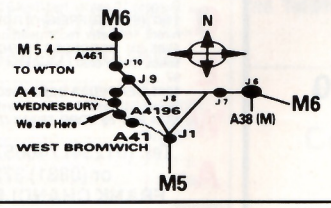

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91 TRANSIT 16 Hi roof coach spec
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1989 F VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH, 50 reclining seats + courier, rear sunken toilet/continental door, double glazing, radio/PA/TV, boiler, excellent condition **£75,000**

1989 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 57 reclining seats, POD, lockers, radio/PA **£59,500**

1988 E VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 53 retrimmed Graffiti reclining seats, courier, Telma, double glazing, POD, radio/PA **£59,500**

1988 PP VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 48/50 reclining seats, courier, demountable rear toilet/continental door, Telma, double glazing, TV/Video/Boiler, curtains, aircraft lockers **£59,500**

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1987 VOLVO B10M BERKHOF ESPRIT 340, 49 retrimmed Vogel reclining seats, courier, centre sunken toilet/continental door, boiler, 2 TV's, radio/PA. Air condition, Webasto. Choice of 2 ..... **£42,500**

1986 VOLVO B10M JONKHEERE JUBILEE 599, 51 reclining seats, courier, rear sunken toilet/continental door, double glazing, radio/PA, TV **£45,000**

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1993 K SCANIA K113 VAN HOOL ALIZEE H, 49 reclining seats, courier, centre sunken demountable toilet/continental door, retarder, d/glazed, bunk ..... ~~£99,500~~ **£95,000**

1986 PP LEYLAND TIGER Z45 VAN HOOL ALIZEE H, manual, 53 recliners, courier, radio/PA **£42,500**

1985 PP DAF MB200 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 retrimmed reclining seats, courier, rear sunken toilet, continental door, boiler, radio/PA, provision for TV **£35,000**

1984 PP LEYLAND TIGER 245 VAN HOOL ALIZEE H, 51 reclining seats, courier seat, Telma, TV **£34,000**

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51/53 seats, beige/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, driver's sleeping berth, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1991 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49/53 recliners, grey/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. OCTOBER 1997

1990 (August) VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE 12M
51/55 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, coolbox, low driving position power entrance door, finished white/yellow/brown.
M.O.T. AUGUST 1997

1989 (September) MCW OPTARE METRORIDER
26 recliners, brown/orange moquette, tinted side windows, curtains, power entrance door, finished white/orange/red.
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49 recliners, brown/orange moquette, rear sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, fridge, driver's sleeping berth, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished white/primrose/orange.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1989 LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLE 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows with pull down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished all white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet O/S rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1987 KASSBOHRER SETRA S215HR INTEGRAL 12M
49 recliners, beige/blue moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, coolbox, AIR CONDITIONING, VOITH retarder, Webasto, power entrance door, finished grey/blue/red. M.O.T. MARCH 1997

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NEW BOVA FUTURA FLD 12.270
53 recliners, seat belts, double tinted double glazing, finished all white.
1 ONLY
NEW VOLVO B9M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE
38 recliners, rear toilet. 1 ONLY

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49 recliners, grey/blue moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, coolbox, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished white/red/green.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1986 DAF DKVL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
53 recliners, grey/blue moquette, courier seat, continental door, tinted side windows, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished all white
CHOICE OF 2. M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1986 LEYLAND TIGER 245 (Auto) PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
48 recliners, brown/orange moquette, o/s rear sunken toilet, continental door, courier seat, wired TV/video, power entrance door, automatic gearbox, finished all white. M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

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SEMI AUTOMATIC Leyland Tiger, Plaxton 3200, first reg 05/83, tested to 03/97, choice of 2, ..**£16,000 each**
LEYLAND TIGER Duple 55 seats, first reg 03/82, new test, choice of 2 ..**£15,000 each**
VOLVO B58 Plaxton, 57 seats, first reg 05/78, tested 08/97 ..**£9500**
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65176/VSM

1988 BOVA FUTURA DAF
49 recliners + toilet, courier seat, tea/coffee machine, blue interior, MoT April '97, vgc, **£75,000**
G reg VAN HOOL ACRON MAN
49 + toilet/53, brown interior, MoT until Jan '97.
Tel: 01485 532349
65172/VSM

Available end of September
1987 B10M PARAMOUNT 3200
53 rec, tinted double glazing, blinds, Telma,radio/PA, MoT August, 1997
£52,000

1987 TIGER PARAMOUNT 3200
Low driver, 53 rec, tinted, dg blinds, Telma, radio/PA, MoT April, 1997
£42,000
01262 488710
(Yorkshire)
65036/VSM

1980 BEDFORD PJK 29 seater coach. Full year's test. Good contract vehicle. **£2,500**
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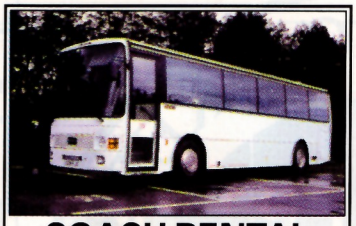

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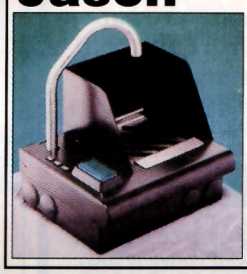

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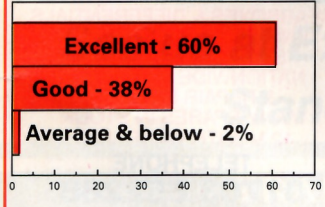

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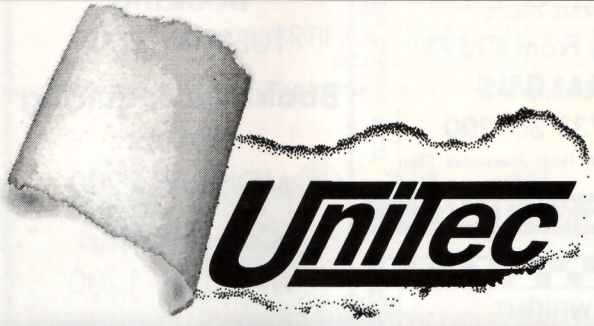

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CentreWest has a contributory pension scheme and the successful applicant will receive travel facilities on London's buses. There is also an employee share ownership scheme.

Further information on this post can be obtained from Pat Daley, General Manager, Westbourne Park Garage on 0171 792 9630.

Please apply in writing, including a comprehensive Curriculum Vitae, to the Personnel Manager, CentreWest London Buses Limited, 3rd Floor, Macmillan House, Paddington Station, London W2 1TY by Friday, 4 October 1996.

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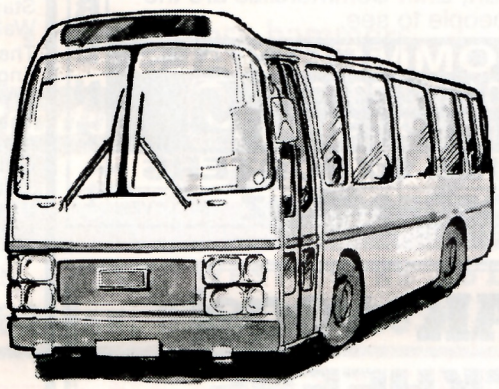
London Transport bus services

Schoolday Bus Services

London Transport Buses is seeking interest from bus and coach operators who would be specifically interested in submitting bids for the operation of schoolday only bus contracts.



If you are interested and have already submitted your pre-qualification documents for LTB's main bus service tendering programme then you need take no further action at this stage.
However if you are interested in operating a school bus service and have not completed London Transport's pre-qualification system for bus service tendering then you must do so by 8th November 1996 in order to receive future invitations for schoolday only services.

A pre-qualification questionnaire is available by writing to:

Mr T Wynne
Buyer
London Transport Buses
172 Buckingham Palace Road
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Telephone 0171 918 3812

London Transport Buses

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Managing Director, Bestchart Ltd, 74 Kennedy Close, Waterlooville, PO7 5NZ to arrive by 10 October, 1996.

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▼ Coach and Bus

Nat Ex director now LCR chief executive

Mills moves to operator of Eurostar link

by Mark Williams

NATIONAL Express director **Adam Mills** has become chief executive of London & Continental Railways (LCR) — operator of the Eurostar link.

Mr Mills was formerly deputy chairman of Nat Ex Group, and has been deeply involved with structuring bids for rail franchises, under the LCR consortium in which Nat Ex has an 18 per cent share.

Other backers in the LCR group are Virgin and London Electricity.

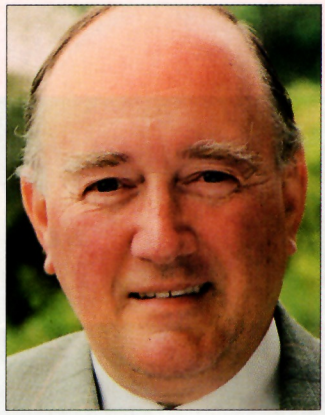
▼ Bus

Ex-Cambus man joins Marshall

MARSHALL Specialist Vehicles, which has just launched its low-floor Minibus, has appointed another former Cambus man to its senior staff.

Alan Myland, formerly engineering director at CHL-owned Viscount, has joined Marshall as head of production. His former CHL colleague, **Mike Winter**, assumes new duties in his role as operations director, now having responsibility for sales, production and after-sales service.

The appointments are backed by support from **Andrea Gothard** as sales administrator and former project manager **Brian Getley** as head of design and after-sales.



Roger Cooke: ex-RAF pilot

▼ Software

Top job landed

A FORMER RAF pilot has joined Fleet Software in a combined chairmanship and customer liaison role.

Roger Cooke, 61, has had a wide range of management experience, which will be put to good use in the marketing of the Sheffield-based company's range of products, including fleet engineering programme FACT.

▼ Insurance

Poached heads

SWIRE Fraser, the Lloyds broking and financial services group, has 'poached' former Belmont International men Dermot Hanafin and John Savidge for its sales team.

Mr Hanafin will head the retail transport division, catering for coach, bus and haulage companies, while Mr Savidge will be responsible for the commercial and fleet businesses.

▼ Coach and Bus

Renault Truck md

RENAULT has appointed a new md for its Truck Commercials division and a new sales director for the Renault VI group.

Daniel Mercer takes over at Truck, having previous been md of a French dealership, and the new sales director is **Arthur Whiteside**.

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Coach and Bus Week is the news weekly for coach and bus operators. *Transit* provides vital analysis of, and information on, the UK public transport scene every fortnight. Together they make an unbeatable and invaluable package. All annual subscription rates include delivery by first class post. It is important to fill out all parts of this form. NB: *Transit* is not available on subscription without *Coach and Bus Week*.

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IT IS IMPORTANT TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

Owner/Director ☐ 01
Senior/General Manager ☐ 02
Engineering/Service Manager ☐ 03
Other. (please specify) ☐ 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator ☐ 01
Coach Operator ☐ 05
Coach & Bus Operator ☐ 02
Local Government ☐ 03
Other (please specify) ☐ 04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	☐ 01	☐ 10
6-10	☐ 02	☐ 11
11-15	☐ 03	☐ 12
16-25	☐ 04	☐ 13
26-39	☐ 05	☐ 14
40-100	☐ 06	☐ 15
101-400	☐ 07	☐ 16
401-1000	☐ 08	☐ 17
1000 +	☐ 09	☐ 18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	☐ 01	☐ 12	☐ 23
Parts/Spares	☐ 02	☐ 13	☐ 24
Oil/Fuel	☐ 03	☐ 14	☐ 25
Breakdown	☐ 04	☐ 15	☐ 26
Insurance/Finance	☐ 05	☐ 16	☐ 27
Fuel Cards	☐ 06	☐ 17	☐ 28
Training	☐ 07	☐ 18	☐ 29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	☐ 08	☐ 19	☐ 30
Ferry Crossing	☐ 09	☐ 20	☐ 31
Hotel Bookings	☐ 10	☐ 21	☐ 32
Theatre Tickets	☐ 11	☐ 22	☐ 33
Other. (please specify)			☐ 34

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

Private Hire ☐ 01
Day Excursions ☐ 02
British Tours ☐ 03
European Tours ☐ 04
Local Government Contracts ☐ 05
Emergency/Breakdown Services ☐ 06

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Return to: Jazz Walshe, *Coach and Bus Week*, Subscription Department, EMAP Automotive Ltd., Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS.
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